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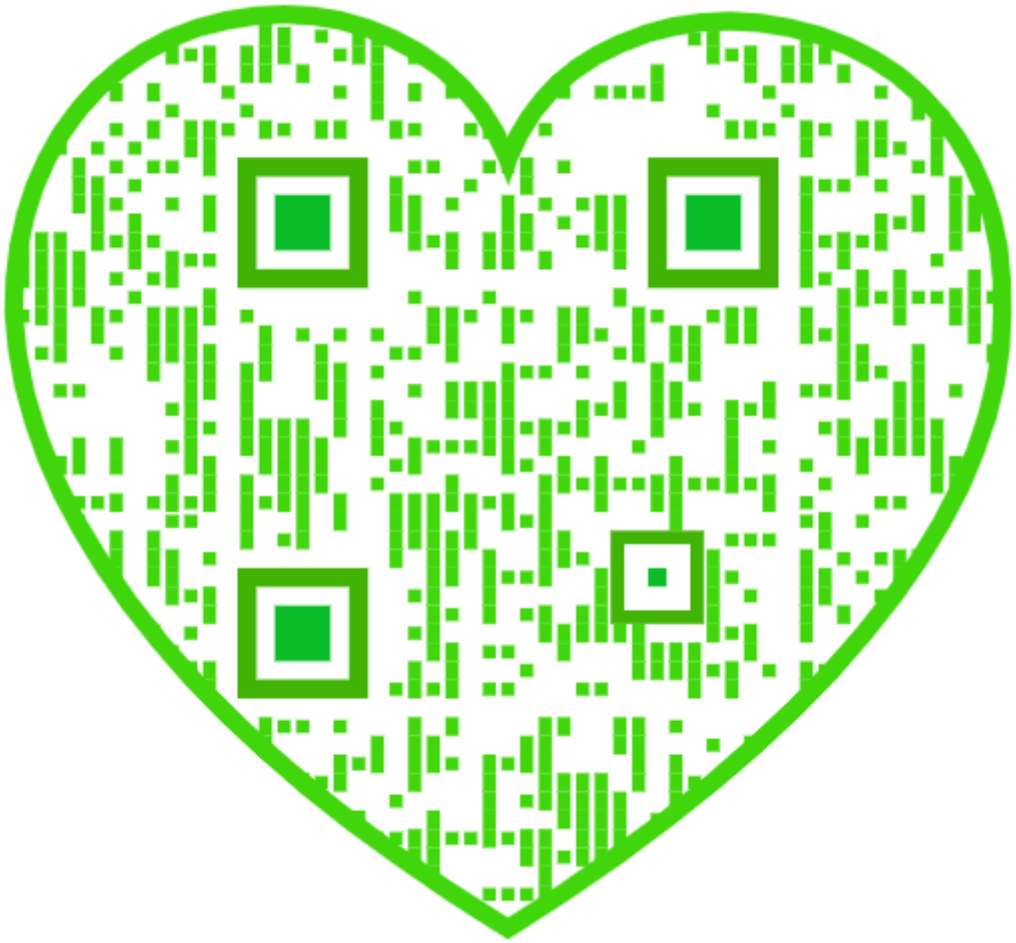

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EARLY ENGLISH FURNITURE AND WOODWORK

VOLUME II

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BY

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Chapter I.

The Development of the Chest and Standing Cupboard.

THE chest or coffer was a most important article of furniture, especially during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, both in houses and monastic establishments. Some idea has already been given of the wealth, in carved and decorated woodwork, which must have been general even in small parish churches, until the first quarter of the sixteenth century. Enough has persisted to our day to give some vague idea of the amount and richness which must have been stored in these churches throughout the length and breadth of England. What has not survived are the treasures in the way of vestments, altar-cloths, jewels and ornaments of gold, silver and enamel, in chalice, paten, altar candlesticks and the like, as these were the prey of the despoiler long ago. Many accounts have been preserved of the wholesale destruction by fire of copes, vestments, banners and altar-cloths. There were many edicts, not only permitting, but even authorising and commanding the burning of canonical vestments as idolatrous trappings. In 1551 the order to demolish all high altars, and to substitute plain wooden tables, went forth, and was generally obeyed.[1] Parish registers give innumerable accounts of the insensate destruction which was carried on from the middle of the sixteenth century, at intervals, until almost the end of the seventeenth. The spoliation of portable church wealth became almost a profession !

The safe custody of these rare fabrics, jewels and vessels of gold and silver, demanded the chest, and the greatest care was taken in its making, especially in the selection of the wood. The *huchers* or *huchiers*, who were employed in the manufacture, were a class of workmen of lower grade than the makers of purely architectural woodwork, but they were under the direct control of the Master Guild, the officials of which enacted stringent laws regarding the selection and seasoning of the timber. In the smaller churches, however, oak was not always used, deal being substituted, which, although an inferior wood, was more highly esteemed than oak, in panellings, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, deal-panelled rooms being referred to in inventories, whereas wainscotting of oak is rarely mentioned.

[1] This explains the presence of so many late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century tables to be found acting as altars, especially in country churches.

The earliest chests of which we have any knowledge date from the middle thirteenth century. The tops nearly always open on pin-hinges, that is, on two pins fixed at the ends of the back under-clamp of the top and socketed into the uprights of the sides. These are rarely, if ever, found in the fourteenth century, heavy iron clamp-hinges being substituted. Fig. 1 is the thirteenth-century type of chest, from Great Bedwyn Church, Wiltshire. It is roughly constructed, yet in a characteristically thirteenth-century manner. The front is a solid board of oak of great width, roughly finished with the saw marks left in its surface, tenoned into heavy uprights. These project over the ends and are united from front to back by two heavy cross pieces, the tenons of which are carried through to the front. The lower one supports the bottom of the chest, which is made from stout wood to carry heavy weights. The ends are housed into the heavy styles, and are fixed to the cross-pieces. There is no attempt at ornamentation, although, originally, the bottom of the upright styles may have been carved with simple cusping. The ironwork at present on the chest is all of much later date.

Fig. 1.

OAK CHEST WITH DEAL TOP FROM GREAT BEDWYN CHURCH, WILTSHIRE.

4 ft. 2 ins. wide by 2 ft. 1 in. high by 1 ft. 9 ins. from back to front.

Early thirteenth century.

The next type, Fig. 2, which also belongs to the thirteenth century, is where the front is formed with very wide upright styles fixed flush to the centre and acting as huge clamps. The tenons of the central panel are secured in the mortises of these vertical clamps by large wooden pegs, which are here allowed to project, and are finished off as ornamental features. The entire front is fixed to the sides with heavy wrought-iron nails. This chest is rare, for its date, in being ornamented with roundels and geometrical devices in chip-carving. As a rule, thirteenth-century chests are plain, and tracery was never applied. This Earl Stonham chest is supported on large runners, kept well away from the ends to minimise any tendency to sagging of the bottom.

There is a still earlier type of chest than those illustrated here, which shows the woodworker copying the methods of the stonemason. This is the dug-out kind, of which several examples exist, where the chest is hollowed out and fashioned from one great piece of timber. Very few have survived, nor is this method calculated to produce a chest which is likely to remain for many years without falling to pieces, owing to the cracking and warping of the timber, which in this large scantling could not possibly have been seasoned before using. Where the reference occurs in the parish accounts of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries to " item, 1 Great Old Ark," it is usually one

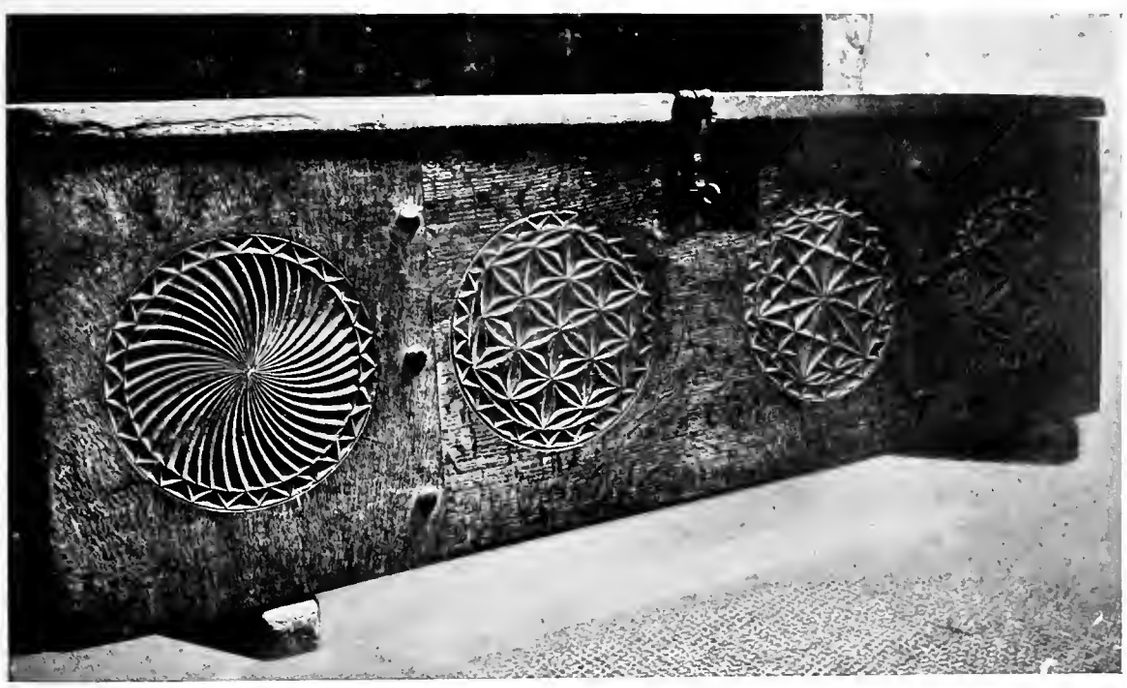


Fig. 2.

OAK CHEST. EARL STONHAM CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Late thirteenth century.

of these dug-out chests which is described. Unfortunately, all chests of this type are not thirteenth century; the practice was still followed for nearly two centuries afterwards, and as the later copies are usually devoid of ornament of any kind, it is impossible to date them with any accuracy. Fig. 3 from Groton and Fig. 4 from Chelsworth are of this ark form, but are constructed chests. The way in which both are heavily banded with iron suggests that they were intended to contain articles of valuable and precious nature. The tops, in each case, are hewn from the solid trunk. Both of these chests are from poplar, a soft wood which is now much perished.

Boxford Church has one of these iron-bound chests, Fig. 5, of a crude form, made from deal. The front and back are carried over the ends and spiked to them. The wood, generally, is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness.

All Saints' Church, at Stansfield in Suffolk, has one of these primitive oak chests, Fig. 6, with heavy iron clamps, vertical on the front and horizontal on the sides. This has the appearance of being of the late thirteenth century, but, if so, the ironwork is a subsequent addition, probably from the next century. The feet date from Jacobean times.

It is extremely rare to find these plain chests of the fourteenth century enriched with heraldic or other paintings. One of these exceptional examples is shown in Figs. 7 and 8. This oak chest dates from the early fourteenth century. It measures 6 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. in length, 2 ft. 1 in. in height and 1 ft. 4 ins. in depth from back to front. It is constructed, in the primitive manner of its period, of wide oak boards cut into solid thick ends and strapped with iron. At each end are iron handles, made with a double link, so that the chest could be slung between two horses or mules during its carriage from place to place. These long chests were nearly always intended for monastic or ecclesiastic use, to contain vestments, deeds or other treasures. Both the ends and the top are slightly domed, and on the inside of the latter, in the centre, is depicted a conflict between a dragon and a figure, half man and half leopard; the figure wears a coif of the period and what may be a hauberk or brigandine of chain mail. At the extreme left hand of the top is a representation of the English lion rampant, and at the other is a gryphon, or one of those unnamable beasts which were very popular from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth century, as supporters in heraldry. Henry VII was the last to indulge in this unknown beast, and in some of his coats the supporters strongly resemble greyhounds. Of the four shields,—allowance being made for the yellowing of the tinctures,—one is that of Sir John Daungerville or d'Aungerville of County Leicester, *temp.* Edward I, a name also spelt Angervile or Angervill. The latter is the form which is used by Richard de

Fig. 3.

POPLAR CHEST. GROTON CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

4 ft. 6 ins. long by 2 ft. 5 ins. total height by 1 ft. 9½ ins. back to front.

Late fourteenth century.

Fig. 4.

POPLAR CHEST. CHELSWORTH CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

4 ft. 5 ins. long over lid by 2 ft. 3 ins. high by 1 ft. 8 ins. back to front.

Late fourteenth century.

Bury, Bishop of Durham. The coat is gules a cinquefoil or ermine pierced within a bordure sable charged with bezants.

The second shield from the left, gules a cross or between four cinquefoils ermine pierced, is not an English coat at all. It may be that either of the abbot of an associated monastery, probably in France, or of a foreign benefactor of Durham Cathedral. That this chest was once the property of the Cathedral is almost certain.

The third is the form, novel at that date, of England quartering France, which may account for the error of the heraldic luminer in placing the lions of England in the wrong quarter. This form was not adopted until 1340, which in a way fixes the maximum age of this chest. There are several instances, at this date, of similar mistakes in emblazoning, where England is given the preference, in quartering, over France.

Fourth, gules a saltire or[1] (should be argent). This is the coat of Nevill, Earl of Westmorland.

This chest was originally either the property of Durham Cathedral or of a large monastery close by. The emblazoning is sufficient to indicate that it was made not earlier than 1340 and during the time when Richard de Bury (himself a d'Aungerville) was Bishop. As he died on August 13th, 1345, the period of this chest is narrowed down to one of five years.

Representations of tilting, in lists, or on the field, may have a definite significance in coffers of this date. Sometimes these tilting scenes were painted, but more often they were carved on the chest-front. We know, at this date, that armour of plate was the

[1] Due to the yellowing of the tinctures by later varnishing.

Fig. 5.

DEAL CHEST. BOXFORD CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

5 ft. long by 1 ft. 6¾ ins. high by 1 ft. 10 ins. front to back.

usual wear, not only of the knights and nobles, but often of the bishops themselves. Odo of Bayeux, although of earlier date, was a good example of a fighting bishop. It is reasonable to suppose that armour, which was a highly valued possession at all periods, may have been kept, for safe custody, in these chests, and that the significance of the contents may have been indicated by the tilting figures on the front. How highly prized armour was, may be gathered from the fact that the victor despoiled the vanquished of his armour only, leaving his other possessions often intact. It is not suggested that this is an armour chest, as the painted scene in the centre of the inside of the lid is not properly a tilting scene at all, but the length is suggestive, as armour, if placed in a chest, would not be thrown in carelessly, as the edges would scratch, not only the surface, but also the damascening or the engraving. It would be laid out, in proper order, and the length of this chest would allow of the display of the complete suit from sollerets to bassinet. The original lock, which is now missing, was probably a very ornate and cumbrous affair, but its type would indicate that the contents of this chest were highly prized, and were to be secured against theft by the best possible means.

Fig. 9 from the Victoria and Albert Museum, has the appearance of being earlier than the fifteenth century, which is the date given by the Department of Woodwork. This chest has the thirteenth-century pin-hinged lid, although the lid itself has the

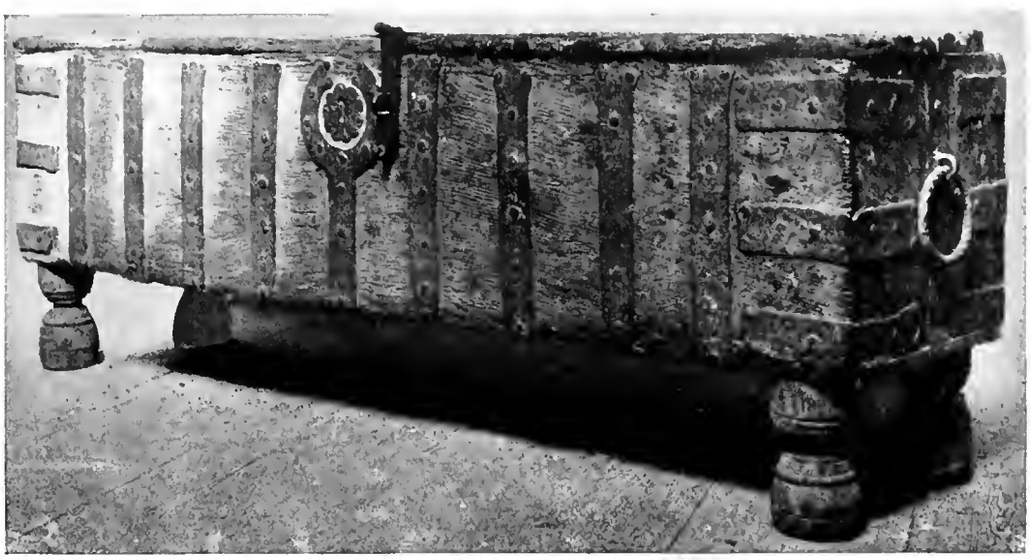


Fig. 6.

OAK CHEST. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, STANSFIELD, SUFFOLK.

5 ft. long by 1 ft. 9 ins. total height (feet 7 ins. high) by 1 ft. 4 ins. back to front.

Early fourteenth century.

Fig. 7.

OAK CHEST WITH IRON STRAPWORK.

6 ft. 4½ ins. long by 2 ft. 1 in. high by 1 ft. 4 ins. back to front.

Fourteenth century. Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

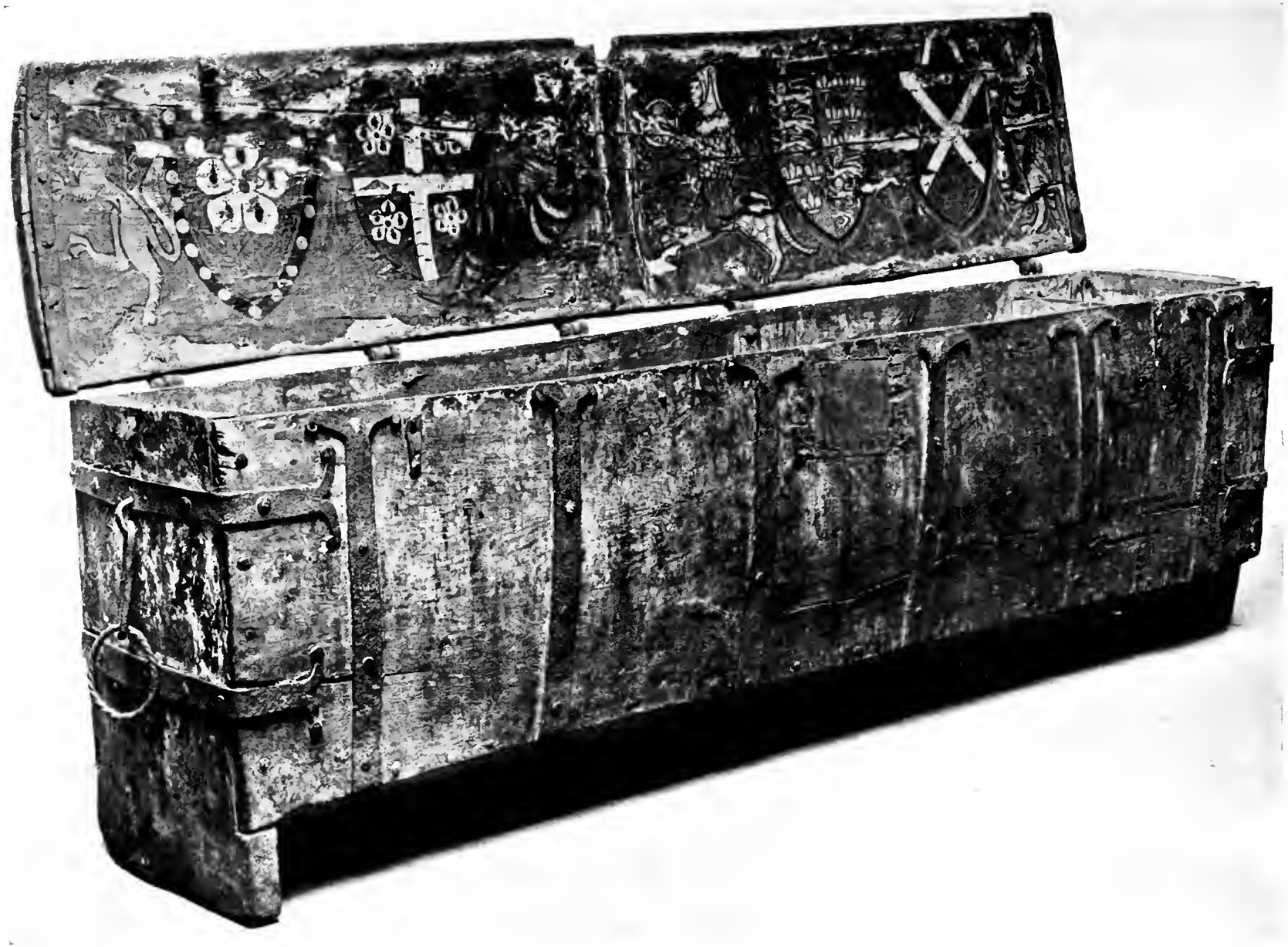


Fig. 8.

THE CHEST, FIG. 7, WITH LID OPEN, SHOWING THE DECORATIVE PAINTING.

appearance of being a reconstruction. This type of chest persisted well beyond the fourteenth to the early fifteenth century, as in Mr. Smedley Aston's example, Figs. 10 and 11, but here the top and the uprights are scratch-moulded, a sure indication of the fifteenth century. The wood here is not left rough from the saw, but is dubbed smooth, and with the plane, not the adze. Although of early type, it is possible that this chest may date from the very end of the century.

Fig. 12 is a characteristic fourteenth-century chest from Dersingham Church, with fully-carved front. It is typical only, however, in belonging strictly to its period, but as an example of an ornate chest of this date it is highly exceptional. It is, beyond question, of English workmanship, whereas many of the ornate chest-fronts of this epoch are of doubtful nationality. The front is decorated with a winged angel holding the scroll of Matthew (Matheus) and Marcus, Lucas and Johannas are represented in the others. The front, which is carved from the solid, is tenoned into wide uprights, traceried in the mid-fourteenth-century manner, and above and below are bands ornamented with the rose of York centred between two birds, in a repeated pattern.

There is no doubt that the making of chest and coffer-fronts was a regular industry in the fourteenth century, the system of solid-front construction lending itself to this separate production. Carvers of high skill evidently engaged in this work, but whether they were all of English origin is doubtful. It is difficult, at the present day, however, to imagine the extent of the English dominions in the years from 1327 to 1376, when Edward III was on the throne of England. The south-western part of France, from the north of Poictiers to the Spanish frontier, including the eastern boundary to Auvergne, Languedoc and Touraine was in the possession of England, and although, with Richard II, much of this was lost, Guienne and Acquitaine were still retained. Paris was more English than French until the middle of the fifteenth century. To speak of English workmen and workmanship at this period, therefore, is very misleading. French artisans intermingled with their English fellow-craftsmen to a large extent, and the wandering Fleming and Walloon frequently settled in this country in the fourteenth century, making his home and following his crafts here, and at the same time exercising a powerful influence on the development of the English *huchier*. The fourteenth-century chest in Faversham Church shows this influence in a very marked manner, and the late fifteenth or sixteenth-century examples such as at Crediton and elsewhere show the French traditions perpetuated in the same way. Equally, the coffer in the Cluny Museum, from the Gerente collection, from the very early fourteenth century, if not earlier, has the English influence intermingled with the French. One of the Knights in the canopied

niches bears the leopards of England on his shield, and others of the twelve show English influence, if not workmanship. Although the relations between the countries were more warlike than artistic,—Crecy was fought in 1346, the siege of Calais was in the following year, and the Battle of Poictiers was only nine years later,—there must have been strong reacting influences between French and English craftsmen, even if the education was only fostered by a study of the pieces looted from each other by the combatants. In this connection, it is well to note that chests, containing valuables, would be just the articles of woodwork which would thus be the most likely to change hands in this way. The coffer-fronts, Figs. 13 and 14, exhibit this foreign influence, especially in the first of the two. Here we have a knight, in armour and on horseback, in pursuit, with poised lance, of a very small dragon which follows a lady in the most docile fashion. The lady holds a strap-lead which is knotted round the dragon's neck.

Fig. 9.
OAK CHEST.
Early fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 10.

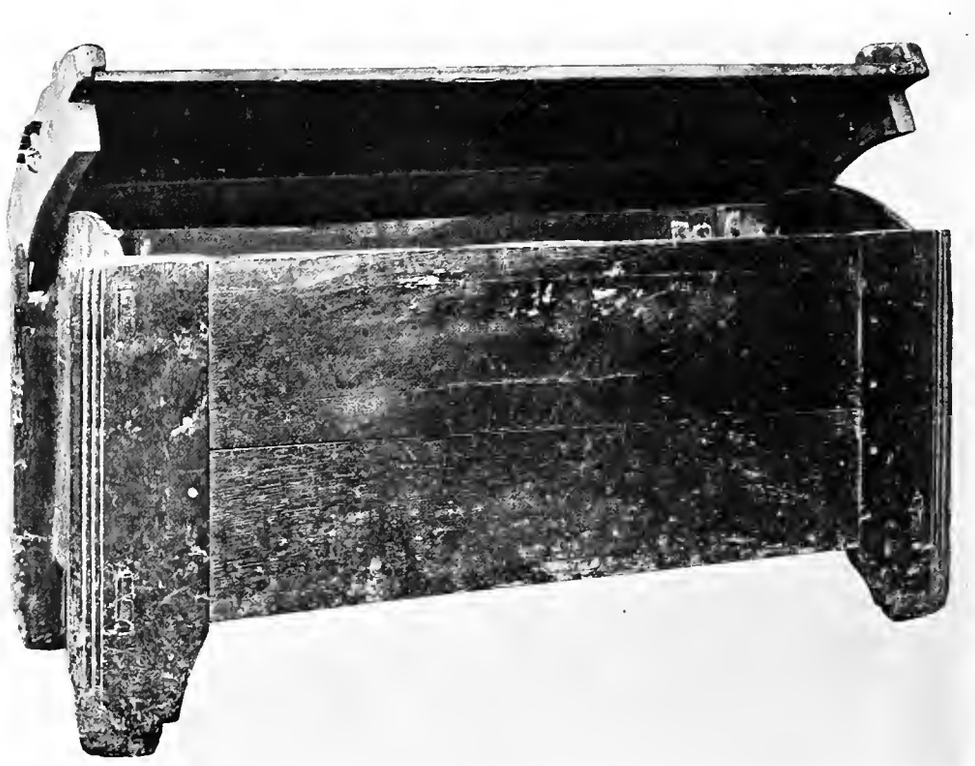


Fig. 11.

OAK CHEST OR ARK.

3 ft. 4 ins. long by 1 ft. 9 ins. high.

Fifteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq

At the left of the panel is another episode of the knight vigorously spearing the dragon (who has lost his neck-strap, by the way) while the rescued maiden kneels in prayer of thanksgiving for the deliverance. At the bottom, at each end, are shown small animals, hares or rodents, entering burrows, and above, on the left is the meeting of the knight and the rescued damsel. To the right, in quaint perspective, is shown the town beleagured by the dragon, with the king and queen, properly crowned, looking forth from the castle windows, which their heads more than fill.[1] The legend of St. George and the Dragon is now regarded as an English one, but this origin is of doubtful authenticity. There is a chest at York which shows exactly the same subject as in this Victoria and Albert Museum example, but reversed. The two were probably by the same hand, and were made, specifically, as coffer-fronts instead of as complete chests. It is doubtful if the Museum example has even been made up as a coffer.

Fig. 14 is more in the English character, cruder in modelling and not so vigorously cut as Fig. 13. Among a jumble of motives are shown the Nativity and the visit of the Wise Men of the East, with the crowning of the Virgin in the presence of the Deity in the right-hand top corner. Below is a representation of the Annunciation. Three horses, —presumably those of the Wise Men—stand in stiff attitudes, with a suspended crown above them, and there are the same curious animals scurrying into burrows, as in Fig. 13, to complete the picture. As an example of coffer-front work of the very close of the

[1] A similar conceit can be seen above one of the portals to the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges.

Fig. 12.

OAK CHEST. DERSINGHAM CHURCH, NORFOLK.

Fourteenth century.

Fig. 13.

OAK PANEL, PROBABLY A CHEST FRONT.

4 ft. 9 ins. long by 2 ft. 1¼ ins. high.

Fourteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 14.

FRONT OF OAK COFFER.

Fourteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

fourteenth century, this is highly interesting, and undoubtedly English in design and execution.

The evidence for this separate manufacture of coffer-fronts is strengthened by Fig. 15, where the front is typically English of the mid-fifteenth century, with perpendicular tracery in low relief, and a Flamboyant centre. It is absurd to imagine that the fine and elaborate front was made for the crude chest to which it now belongs. The top has the appearance of being of seventeenth-century date, but this may be an addition. The roughly incised decoration of the uprights indicates no period, but this work is, obviously, not by the same hand as the traceried front.

Fig. 16 is unmistakably foreign, French or Burgundian, although there is strong English feeling in the traceried panels of the side doors. This was, in all probability, a credence, the legs of which have been cut down. It dates from the latter part of the fifteenth century, when chests were rarely, if ever, supported on legs. Similar tracery will be noticed in the door panel, Fig. 17, the English origin of which is more certain. There is the same ogival tracery in the lower fenestration as in the side doors to Mr. Aston's cabinet. Both are of about the same period.

Marked traces of the Flamboyant still linger in the next panel, Fig. 18, which is somewhat earlier than the preceding example. The central tracery is ogival, in the

Fig. 15.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY OAK CHEST WITH PANEL OF EARLIER DATE.

The panel is mid-fifteenth century.

manner of the mid-fifteenth-century great windows, and there is no trace of the cusping which is so marked on the next example, Fig. 19, a chest from the Lady Chapel of St. Michael's Parish Church at Coventry. This is a typical late fifteenth-century Church muniment or vestment chest of large size and great weight. The ends are closely frame-braced over solid sides, and the front with its uprights is richly ornamented. Here again, it will be noticed that the front panel only is ecclesiastical in character, the uprights being rosetted in diamond tracery with a swan or other bird in the central panel. The top is nearly two and a half inches in thickness, of straight-cut oak, with tongued clamps at the ends. The side framings and the hasps are bolted through with large wrought-iron nails. The two locks are of a later date. For its age, this chest is in wonderful preservation. It is one of the earliest examples known where the uprights are prolonged to act as feet, with a shaped apron uniting them on the front.

Fig. 16.

OAK CABINET, PROBABLY FRENCH OR BURGUNDIAN.

4 ft. 3 ins. wide by 3 ft. 2 ins high by 2 ft $0\frac{3}{4}$ in. back to front.

Late fifteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

Fig. 17.
OUTDOOR PANEL.
Late fifteenth century.

Before dismissing the subject of these chests of elaborate kind but of questionable nationality, one example, now in Christchurch Museum at Ipswich, is illustrated in Fig. 20, together with another, which strongly resembles it, in Crediton Church, Devonshire, Figs. 21 and 22. The Ipswich chest has not been improved by the later plinth with the carved inscription above it. Both these chests are of the Flamboyant Gothic of the close of the fifteenth or the commencement of the sixteenth centuries, and of French origin, but, possibly, from the provinces which had remained English, in ideas if not in actual fact, at this date. It cannot be suggested that these fine chests were either made in England or under English supervision, although the central panel of the Ipswich chest is carved with the English lion. This, however, is a later insertion, the coat being that of the town of Ipswich. Both examples are certainly not prior to 1500 in date, but at this period the Italian Renaissance was dominating the woodwork of France. They may, on the other hand, have been imported from the Low Countries, which would account, in some measure, for the Flamboyant Gothic as late as 1500–20. This hypothesis is preferable to ascribing a date in the fifteenth century, even although the Gothic character is more French than Flemish, both in design and execution.

Fig. 18.
OAK PANEL.
17½ ins. high by 13 ins. wide.
Late fifteenth century.

Another example from the Christchurch Museum, Fig. 23, is typical Touraine work of the early sixteenth century, but this may have been, and probably was, imported as a chest-front, only the front and the two end panels being actual work of the period.

If it be difficult to postulate a country of origin for a chest, with a carved front strongly suggestive of French workmanship, but where the top, sides and back may have been, and probably were, made in this country, there can be little or no doubt regarding the

fine walnut chest illustrated in Fig. 24. Not only is the wood foreign, but the chest bears the arms of Henry II when Dauphin of France, together with his motto, "Donex totum impleat orbe." The top is domed in the manner of the thirteenth century, before described, but here it is constructed, in cooper-jointing, not hewn from solid timber as in the case of the earlier examples. The front is finely carved in representation of a joust or actual combat, and at each corner are caryatid figures modelled in the fine manner of the Italian Renaissance. It is possible, considering the period of this chest,—which can be stated within narrow limits,—that one of the contemporaries of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) if not the master himself, may have had something to do with its designing, as we know that Francis I was a liberal and cultured patron of Italian artists and craftsmen of his period. There is real spontaneity and inspiration evident in this chest as compared with the skilful but

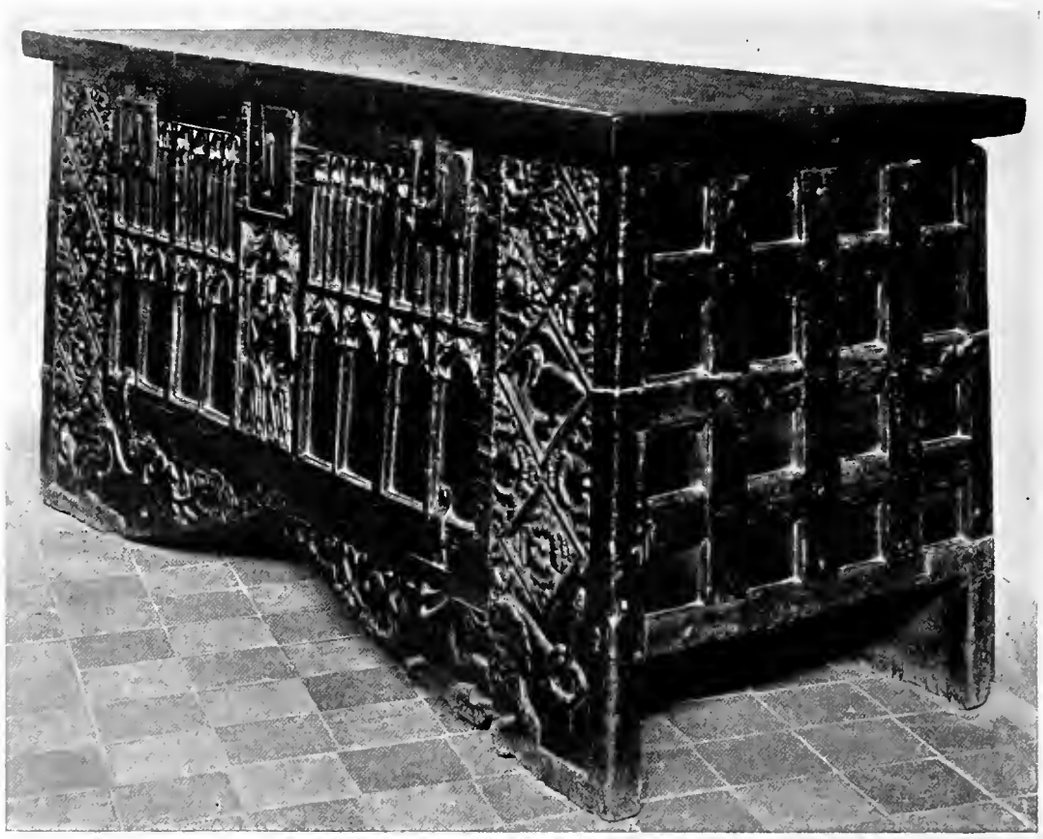


Fig. 19.

OAK MUNIMENT OR VESTMENT CHEST.

Lady Chapel, St. Michael's Church, Coventry.

6 ft. 5 ins. long by 3 ft. 2 ins. high by 2 ft. 3 ins. back to front.

Fifteenth century.

mannered duplication which is evident in much of the secular woodwork or furniture of this period, both in this country and in France.

Fig. 25 is one of the small secular chests of the beginning of the sixteenth century, constructed of oak with a front and top of elm. The two roundels are chip-carved in the late Gothic manner. The cutting is rough, as one would expect in a secular chest at this date, and the Gothic traditions are imperfectly comprehended. The lock is not original. It probably possessed one, of well-finished ironwork, buttressed in the Gothic style. At this date, although woodwork fell from its former high standard very frequently, it is rare to find poor ironwork.

The reading desk, Fig. 26, belongs to the late fifteenth century, and, although now considerably restored, still shows much of its original condition, with two rows of cusped Gothic arcading, the upper one finishing below with crenellated coping. It has been cut down, and has lost its original moulded base.

The ambry, or small cupboard fixed near the altar to contain the sacramental

Fig. 20.
OAK CHEST.
Date about 1500–20. Christchurch Park Museum, Ipswich.

vessels, is the first instance of the development from the chest form, with a lid, to the cupboard with a door. It appears towards the close of the fifteenth century only, and is rare until about 1470. After that date it begins to develop rapidly, and standing or livery cupboards, with doors, take the place, largely, of the former chests with lids, although not entirely. The cupboard merely becomes, as it were, an addition to the furnishing of the house. It is always rare in a church, that is, as a piece made specifically for clerical use as compared with one presented or bequeathed. Cupboards possess certain advantages over chests which would cause their rise in favour to be both rapid and permanent. Articles, such as goblets of metal, can be placed vertically in a cupboard, and on two or more tiers if it be provided with shelves, and each article is accessible without one touching another. Against these advantages must be set the facts that for clothing, linen or vestments, which could be laid flat and at length, the chest offers advantages which the cupboard does not possess, and a chest, thus filled, could be easily transported, whereas the cupboard could only be moved with difficulty, especially if its vertical position had to be maintained.

Two of these ambry doors of the close of the fifteenth century, if not the beginning of the sixteenth, are shown in Figs. 27 and 28. In the one is a representation of the

Fig. 21.
OAK CHEST.
Date about 1520. Crediton Church, Devon.

Virgin, in the other an acolyte holding a chalice. Both are niched beneath semi-circular arches vaulted to spiral columns. The peculiar character of drapery treatment among English carvers will be noted here. French foldings are sharper, and more mannered, if we except some of the figures sculptured in wood from Touraine of the fifteenth century. In these ambry doors the emergence from the Gothic traditions can be remarked. Fig. 29 is a door from one of the standing buffets of the early sixteenth century, showing traces of Flamboyant Gothic without cusping. In a piece of purely ecclesiastical inspiration this door might have been referred to the previous century.

Secular Gothic of the later fifteenth century is nearly always cruder and flatter than the clerical; practically chip-carving, executed with sharp clean cuts with the V-gouge or parting tool. The geometrical form of interlacing circular heads, which produces the pointed or lancet arch at the intersections, was a favourite detail, possibly because it was easily remembered and as easily executed. The next three examples show this device. Fig. 30 has chip-carved roundels in square panels at either end, with double arcading between, and is designed with a place for a lock-plate, whereas in Fig. 31 the interlaced arcade runs right along the chest-front and the lock-plate covers the ornament. The change in the decoration below shows that a lock with covering plate was intended, however. Fig. 32 from the Strangers' Hall at Norwich, shows an elaborated version of this interlacing of arches, the mullions being imbricated, and the spaces between, cut with Gothic arcading in the Perpendicular style. All three chests are constructed in a similar way, with solid fronts rebated into the ends and fixed with nails or pegs.

The next example, Fig. 33, also dates from the fifteenth century, but is very late. It has the chip roundels, forming much the same patterns as a child would devise with a draughtsman's compass. On none of these chests do the locks appear to be original, and, apart from the perishable

Fig. 22.

THE END VIEW OF THE CHEST, FIG. 21.

nature of iron there is also the suggestion that these locked chests have been rifled, in nearly every instance, a not unlikely contingency, considering the state of England in the fifteenth century.

The fine oak chest from the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is inscribed "N. FARES," is illustrated in Figs. 34 and 35. This remarkable piece was obviously made to stand with one end against a wall (the opposite end to the one shown in the illustration is plain), but it is carved on both sides, and the back, or hinged side, is more ornate than the front. The central hole in the front shows that it was originally fitted with one of the enormous and complicated iron locks, in height of full chest-depth, which were only used on very important coffers, made to contain articles of great value. This is a late fifteenth-century chest, and of English make, beyond question, and it could only have been made for an important person or purpose. Mr. Fred Roe's contention that it was made for an apothecary of high standing of the name of Fares can only be

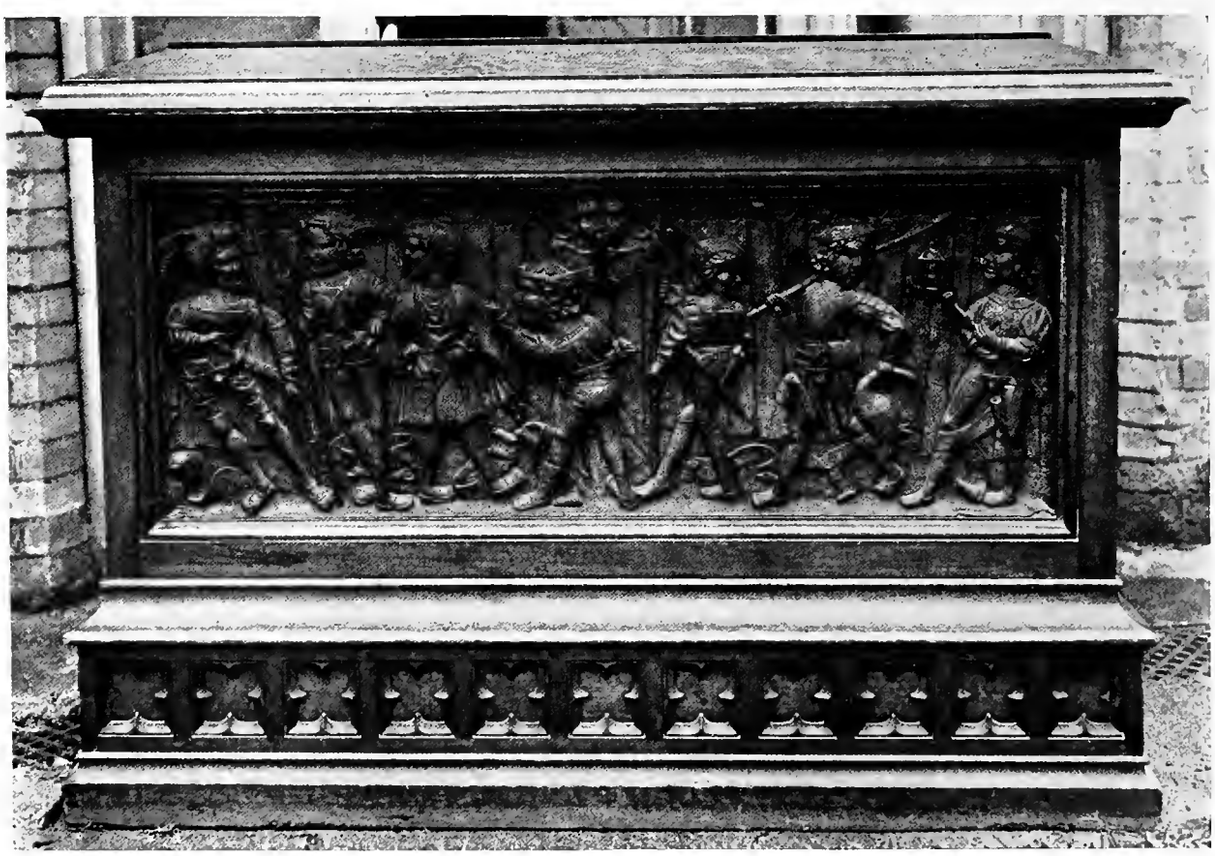


Fig. 23.

OAK CORPORATION CHEST.

Early sixteenth century. Christchurch Museum, Ipswich.

due to superliveliness of imagination; no apothecary in the fifteenth century would have possessed such a chest, so massive and elaborate, and so heavily guarded. He would have nothing of sufficient value to place inside it, apart from other weighty considerations. There are several hypotheses which are more credible. It may have been presented to an abbot or high church dignitary, and the name may be that of the donor, or more probable still, the name "N. FARES" may indicate an initial of a Christian name coupled with the Latin name of an abbey or see, in the same manner as Cantuar or

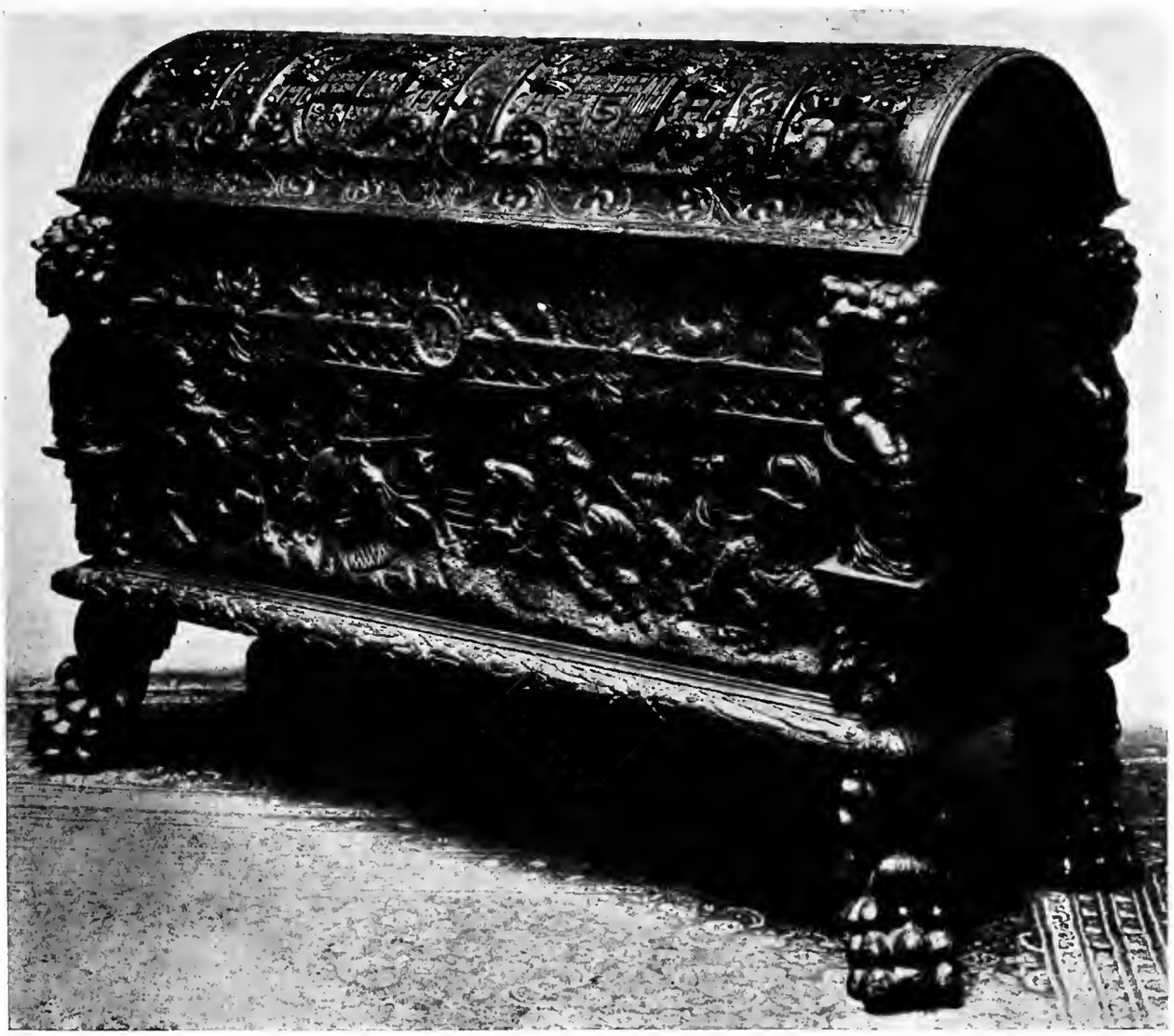


Fig. 24.

CARVED WALNUT CHEST (FRENCH).

4 ft. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ins. wide by 1 ft. 9 ins. deep by 3 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. total height.

Date about 1540. Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

Ebor. It may have been the strong chest of one of the powerful semi-clerical guilds of that period, made to contain robes and insignia, in which case, "FARES" may still be the name of a place, rather than of a person. The front of the chest was, evidently, the side of least importance, other than to one opening the lid, which is the first item of significance. It has two voluted leafed stalks, terminating in the Rose of York; certainly not the Tudor rose at this date. At the carved end is the monogram "N.F." surmounted by an inverted and stalked acorn calyx or cup, the same device being repeated on the back before the carving of the name. It would be interesting to ascertain if this were not one of the signs of the Cluniac order, which was a powerful guild even as late as this. The trailing vine-tendrils, with leaves and bunches of grapes, may have a religious significance, and the rose at the top left-hand corner in Fig. 35, with a similar device repeated in a row on the band underneath, may mean more than simple ornament. The uprights on this side are buttressed, in the late fifteenth-century manner. The base, on the back and side, is lunetted and carved with cusping. Similar detail probably existed on the front, but has perished. The coffer is small for its appearance; 3 ft. 6½ ins. in length, 1 ft. 6 ins. in depth and 1 ft. 5½ ins. in height, but it may have been either cut down or some inches of its original base worn away. The work which has been lavished upon it, and the high quality of its execution, show that it must have been a piece of first importance when it was made. The suggestion that it may have contained relics

Fig. 25.

CHIP-CARVED CHEST OF ELM AND OAK.

3 ft. 1½ ins. long by 1 ft. 1¼ ins. high by 1 ft. 1¾ ins. back to front.

Date about 1500.

may explain its rich character and its small size. Its original associations were undoubtedly clerical, either with an abbey or one of the semi-ecclesiastical guilds.

The sixteenth century witnessed the abrupt decline of the fine earlier Gothic traditions, after the destruction of the monasteries began in 1536. The Gothic lingered, but the earlier guidance of the Church is clearly absent in the woodwork produced after this date. Such a decline can be explained by no other hypothesis than the dispersal of the former knowledge and taste, with the abolition of the monastic houses. It is at this period that we get crude Gothic ornament of cusped tracery, coupled with still cruder construction, which might cause one to imagine that these examples were the forerunners of much of the fine woodwork of the fifteenth century. There are later methods visible in many of these pieces, however, such as the scratch-moulding of the upright styles of Fig. 36 for example, which show that mere crudity is no necessary indication of age. The construction here is from solid boards, without framing, uprights nailed to the sides in the manner of the early chests, and the doors of one piece, pierced and carved. No woodworker of the Gothic period, however, would have been responsible for the Catherine-wheel-like pattern of the tracery in the lower door of this cupboard, nor the circular holes above the arcading in the upper one. This must be regarded as an example of the depraved period, from about

Fig. 26.

OAK READING DESK

3 ft. 2¼ ins. high by 2 ft. 9⅞ ins. wide by 1 ft. 9½ ins. deep.

Late fifteenth century.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

1540 to 1560, when the former Gothic designers were roaming the highways or lurking in the forests of England as vagabonds and outlaws.

The dole cupboard, Fig. 37, said to have come from Ivychurch, an old house at Alderbury in Wiltshire, but probably looted from a monastery at the Dissolution, is earlier, and better than the preceding. To begin with, it is low, not as high as an ordinary table, and has little or none of the appearance of a cupboard cut down. It has the usual central door (it is to be noted that double doors shutting together do not appear, in English furniture, until the close of the seventeenth century) pierced with geometrical devices, and the broad front styles or uprights are traceried in rude Gothic forms without cusping. The vertical mouldings are merely gouge-channels, very different from the scratched mouldings of Fig. 36. This dole cupboard was probably intended to stand on a raised platform or table in the chancel, to contain gifts of the charitable, such as loaves,

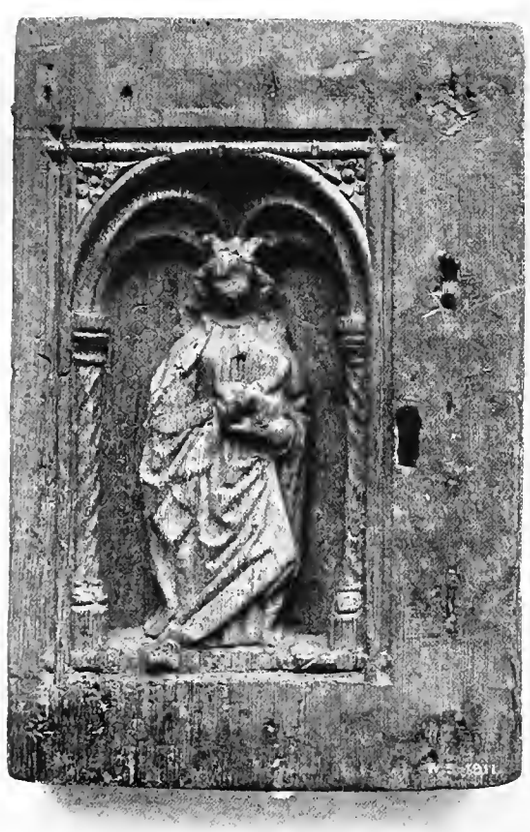


Fig. 27.

15 ins. high by 10¼ ins. wide.

Fig. 28.

15 ins. high by 10½ ins. wide.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

OAK AMBRY DOORS.

Early sixteenth century.

Fig. 29.

OAK DOOR FROM BUFFET.

18½ ins. high by 14⅜ ins. wide.

Early sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

to be distributed on certain occasions. It is significant that doles of this kind began to be general at the commencement of the sixteenth century; they were unknown before, as up to 1470 living was so cheap that it was frequently included in the terms of hiring of the skilled worker in wood or stone, as we have seen in the earlier chapters of this book.

Fig. 38 is a standing cupboard of about 1550; an important piece for this date. The doors, which are central, the one above the other in the usual way, are pierced in crude Gothic tracery, but the designs are of no period. In the upper door the crocketting is early fifteenth-century in character, whereas the door itself is sixteenth. The supposition that the design of the piercing of two lower side panels represents the feathers of the Prince of Wales and that the cupboard was made for Prince Arthur, the eldest brother of Henry VIII, Mr. Fred Roe, very rightly, rejects. The device is, more probably, a representation of a bill-hook, and Mr. Roe's contention that this device may represent a rebus on the name of its first owner may be correct. William Hook occurs as an easy solution, if one could establish the date when the Christian name was first known by

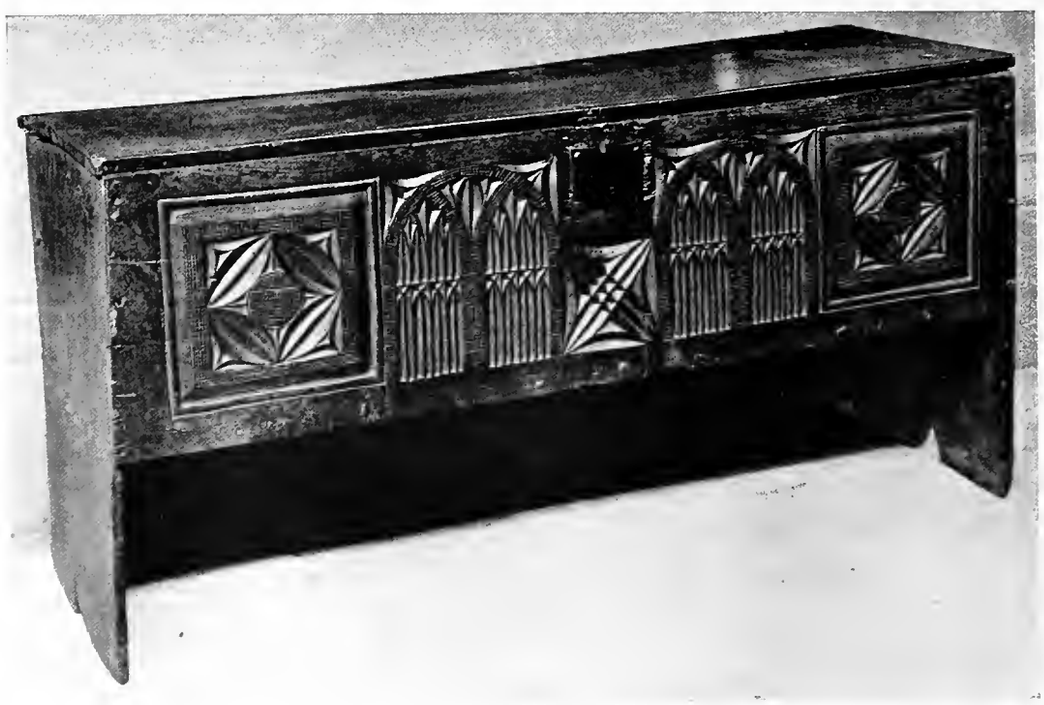


Fig. 30.

OAK CHEST.

4 ft. 5 ins. wide by 2 ft. 2¼ ins. high by 1 ft. 7 ins. deep.

Late fifteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

its familiar diminutive. The cupboard came from Burwaston in Shropshire, and was presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Mr. Robert Mond, F.S.A., in 1912. Belonging to a type of furniture which has been extensively forged, there is no doubt as to its authenticity, although the apron-pieces uniting the front legs are certainly open to question.

The long oak panel, Fig. 39, carved in open piercing with stems of hop and oak may be introduced here to make a comparison between the fine work of the fifteenth century and that of the sixteenth. This panel, carved as it is with knowledge, skill and taste, is probably earlier than 1480, yet it shows a scholarly emancipation from much of the Gothic tradition which is truly remarkable for this period. There is, of course, enough of the Gothic in the forms of the openings, together with its fine execution, to establish an approximate date. It owes a good deal to the worker in iron.

Examples of chests of the thirteenth century are not plentiful, for obvious reasons, but those at Stoke d'Abernon in Surrey, Saltwood in Kent, York Cathedral and Felping, Midhurst, South Bersted, Chichester Cathedral and Buxted, all in Sussex, and the very interesting chest at Bloxham in Oxfordshire may be cited as representative of their period.

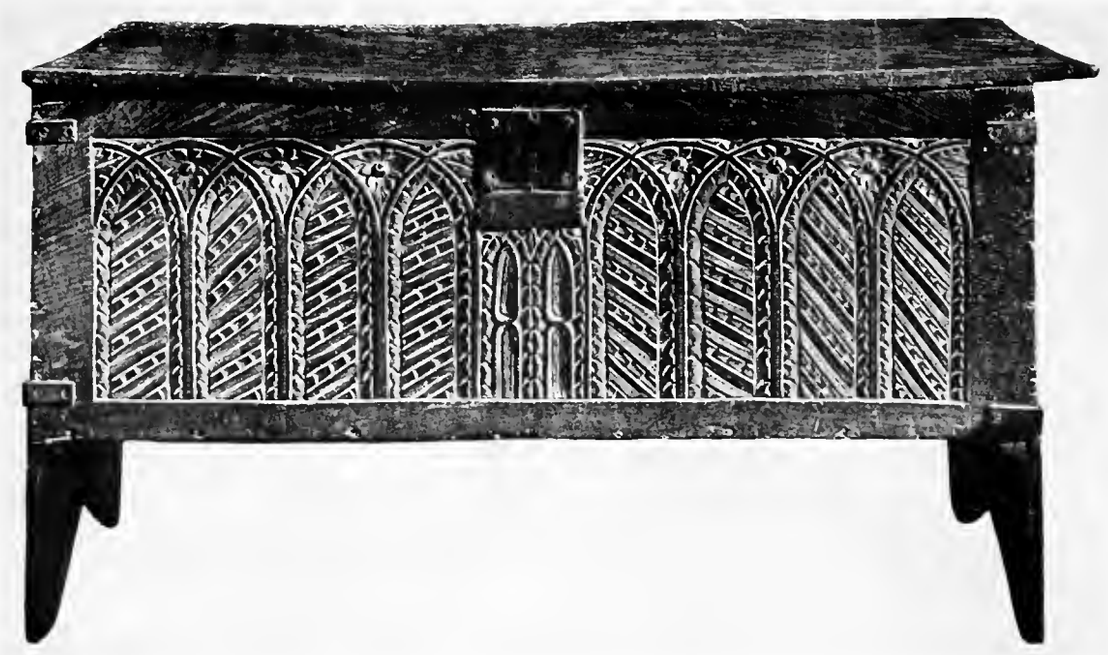


Fig. 31.

OAK CHEST.

4 ft. 6 ins. wide by 2 ft. 4½ ins. high by 1 ft. 7 ins. deep.

Late fifteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

Fourteenth-century chests are also rare ; only those of exceptional quality, as a rule, appear to have been preserved. At South Acre, Hereford, (All Saints') Litcham, Wath, Huttoft, Brailes, Alnwick, Brancepeth, Hacconby, Oxford (St. Mary Magdalene), Derby (St. Peter's), Faversham, Chevington, Rainham and Canterbury (St. John's) very fine examples may be found. Others have already been illustrated in preceding pages. Coffers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are well represented here, and those of the seventeenth are legion.

The introduction of the Italian Renaissance ornament dates almost from the commencement of the sixteenth century, but its first important expression is in the tomb of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey, the work of Pietro Torrigiano,—or Peter Torrisany as he is styled in the documents of the time,—who was commissioned for the work by the dead King's son, in 1509–17. That this was the first real expression of the Renaissance in England is doubtful ; the intercourse with France, although intermittent, had been too frequent for it to be necessary for a king to introduce the new style into this country. The Atherington screen, Fig. 132, Vol. I, for example, is an expression of the Renaissance ornament which is probably prior to Henry VII's tomb, certainly not long enough after to have been influenced by the new style from this source.

Figs. 40 to 43 show this early sixteenth-century Renaissance feeling at its best. A comparison of these with the panelling from St. Vincent at Rouen, illustrated in Fig. 274, Vol. I, will show the motive-inspiration. These panels were evidently

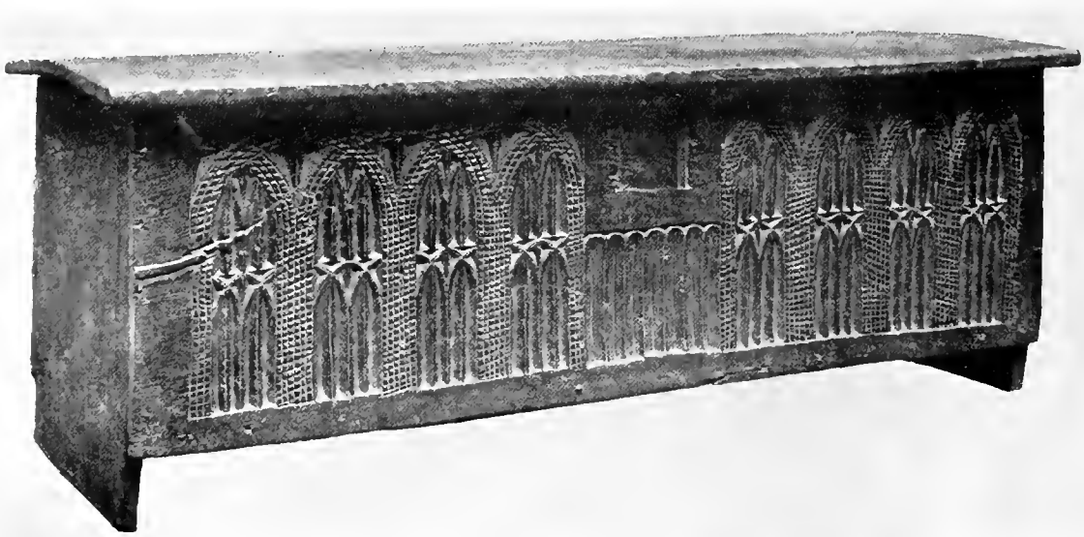


Fig. 32.
OAK CHEST.
Late fifteenth century. Leonard G. Bolingbroke, Esq.

made for enclosing in grooved framing, as on the first two the sight markings are clearly visible.

A fine ruffle or lace-box, with carvings of similar character, but somewhat later type to the preceding, is illustrated in Fig. 44. The strap-work motif of the late sixteenth century, which afterwards became such a paramount feature in the furniture of Elizabeth's reign, can be seen here in its early manner. The older solid form of construction is still adhered to, but the box is small, the front panel only 17 ins. by 5½ ins., which probably dictated this method.

It must not be assumed because an improved form was not adopted that it was unknown at a particular date. It will be noticed in all the examples of chests and cupboards which have been illustrated, so far, that framing, whether of chest-fronts or cupboard doors, is absent. The principle of tenoning and mortising styles and rails together to form a frame, rebated on the back, or grooved, for the insertion of a panel, was well known as early as the fifteenth century, or even before, as much of the church work, screens and the like, demonstrate. The fifteenth-century chair from St. Mary's Hall, Coventry, shown in a later chapter, is an instance of framing, not at all in the manner of a novice, but showing that the principle was thoroughly understood and

Fig. 33.

OAK CHEST.

3 ft. wide by 1 ft. 8½ ins. high by 1 ft. 3 ins. deep.

Late fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

practised. The method, once adopted, would prove so superior to the making of a door from a simple flat board (with its liability to warp and crack, especially when weakened by the piercing of tracery), that it would not be discarded readily. We must assume, therefore, that while framing was known, it was not adopted by the makers of these early chests, in spite of its manifest superiority. To say that framing was known to these men, and was ignored in favour of flat boards, is a hardy assumption ; it is more probable that they were not educated in the making of framing, which demands accurate mortising and tenoning if the frame is to be perfectly flat when put together. To the modern cabinetmaker this is a trifle, as he constructs framing almost every day, as a matter of course. Yet some may recollect their early efforts, where tenons were not cut perfectly parallel with the line of the rail itself, and where mortises were sunk not quite at the vertical right-angle, with the result that the frame would rock like a cradle when placed flat on the bench. It is one thing to know how a frame is constructed ; it is quite another to be able to make one.

We cannot assume an ability which was allowed to rust from disuse, however ; a facility, even when not practised, is not lost so easily. We must infer that the makers of chests were of another class to those who constructed panelling, pulpits or church screens, and researches prove this to be the fact. The *huchers* or *huchiers*, or arkwrights

Fig. 34.

OAK CHEST.

3 ft. 6¼ ins. wide by 1 ft. 5½ ins. nigh by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.

Late fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum

as they are termed in documents of the time, were a class of furniture-makers held in much less esteem than the architectural woodworkers, or those who were responsible for panelling and screens. They appear to have separated themselves from the carpenters as early as the thirteenth century, and to have established a Guild of their own. That they were inferior, in constructive skill, to the carpenters, until the latter part of the sixteenth century, is proved by their work. The carpenter was nearly always church-directed ; the *hucher* rarely so. Furniture of any description was small in variety and meagre in amount, and the trade of the *hucher* could not have possessed the importance which it acquired at a later date.

Actually, up to the close of the fifteenth century, woodworkers were divided into three classes, all under the jurisdiction, in varying degrees, of the Guild of Master Carpenters. First in order of importance came the wood-sculptors or ymagers (Fr. *tailleurs d'images*, Flemish *beeldersnyders*, modern German *bilderschneiders* or *bildhauers*, literally hewers of pictures) ; secondly the carpenters, and, lastly, the *huchers*, or makers of furniture. The latter only obeyed the stringent regulations of the Guild regarding the selection, cutting and seasoning of timber.[1]

Chests showing this Renaissance character are not exceptionally rare, and it is with them that we reach the period of framed construction, as adopted by the *hucher*, as distinct from the carpenter, who had framed up panels nearly a century before. Fig. 45 is framed and panelled, with tenons secured in their mortises with wooden pins, in the manner which persisted throughout the seventeenth century until its very close. The styles and rails are moulded on three sides, and chamfered below, in the manner of panelling. This fragment, however, is undoubtedly a part of a chest, but the absence of lock-plate, or provision for the lock itself, suggests that it is the back framing. The panels are curious and archaic, quite in the English manner of the period. On the left is represented Adam and Eve beneath the Tree of Knowledge. In the centre, two angels support a shield having on it the Passion Symbols, and on the right the decoration

[1] How strict these regulations were, may be gathered from the following extracts from the records of the Carpenter's Company :—

" 1474. Edward 4. 14.
Itm̃ paid to *f*geauntes for diũce tymes for restyng of stuffe Vjs
(Seizure of defective timber.)
Itm̃ paid to a *f*geaunte of the Mayes to areste stuffe and in expenc the same tyme XVd
1503. 19 Henry 7.
Rec of a foreñ carpent to haue lycens to set vpp̃ an howse w^in the Serient in Chauncellor Lane XXd "
(A ' foreign ' carpenter was one who had not been admitted to the Company.)

is one of stalked grotesque heads. The work is of the Midland type usually to be met with in Cheshire or Shropshire.

Fig. 46 is a complete chest of the same archaic character, but undoubtedly post-Reformation. Pieces of this type were frequently made by country *huchers* of little or no tradition, and were presented to churches. They were usually inscribed with the name of the donor or original owner. The carving is extremely crude. The framing is scratch-moulded and stop-chamfered, the inside muntins only being worked with a coarse ovolo section. The type appears to be Somerset of the mid-sixteenth century.

Chests of the so-called "Nonsuch" inlaid type, similar to Fig. 47, appear towards the end of the sixteenth century, but their nationality is questionable. The work is really parqueterie, rather than inlay or marqueterie,[1] and although Tonbridge, at a later date, was the home of this industry,—hence the term "Tonbridge ware,"—it is more probable that it copied and adopted the method from chests of this type, rather than that the style originated in that part of Kent at this early period. The palace of Nonesuch, at Cheam, in Surrey, was built by Henry VIII in his later life, and was regarded as one of the wonders of England at that date. It was sold to the Earl of Arundel in 1555, but some forty years later it was repurchased by Elizabeth, with whom it became a favourite residence. Presented by Charles II in 1670

[1] The significance of the terms is explained in Chapter V of this Volume.

Fig. 35.
THE BACK OF THE CHEST, FIG. 34.

to his mistress, Barbara, afterwards, Duchess of Cleveland, it was demolished by her. Hofnagle engraved a view of the Palace in 1582, which shows it possessing three towers capped with onion-shaped cupolas, such as are represented in the central panels of this chest. The peculiarity, in England, of cupolas of this kind—that is, admitting the accuracy of Hofnagle's engraving, which there is no reason to doubt, —is some evidence for the English origin of these chests, especially as they are found in some numbers in this country.[1]

Fig. 48 is another example, which, from its strong similarity, in many of the details of the inlay, strongly suggests a common origin, for both, not only of country or locality, but even of actual maker. It must be remembered that inlay presupposes a master-pattern, or "pricking" (see Chapter V for a definition of this and other terms used

Fig. 36.

OAK STANDING CUPBOARD.

5 ft. 2 ins. high by 2 ft. 9 ins. wide by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.

Mid-sixteenth century.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

[1] It has been suggested, with some plausibility, that the decoration of these inlaid chests was copied from one of the buildings on old London Bridge.

by the marqueterie-cutter) from which copies can easily be taken, whereas to reproduce inlay from an actual piece implies both the drawing and pricking of another pattern; a tedious and laborious task. It is feasible, therefore, to suppose that where two pieces exhibit the same design in inlay (not necessarily the use of the same woods), they are from the same hand or workshop, unless we are to suppose that patterns were made and "prickings" sold, as articles of commerce, to makers throughout England; a very unlikely proceeding. Of these so-called "Nonsuch" chests,—which are really coffers,—Mr. Percy Macquoid, in his "*History of Furniture*," illustrates three, in which the same towers are represented. Against this must be set the fact that many chests and cabinets unquestionably from the Rhine Provinces, were imported into England, in which similar devices and methods to those in these "Nonsuch" chests were practised. Figs. 49 and 50 are two views of one of these German cabinets of the seventeenth century. The fronts of the drawers inside can be compared with the panels of Figs. 47 and 48, and will show

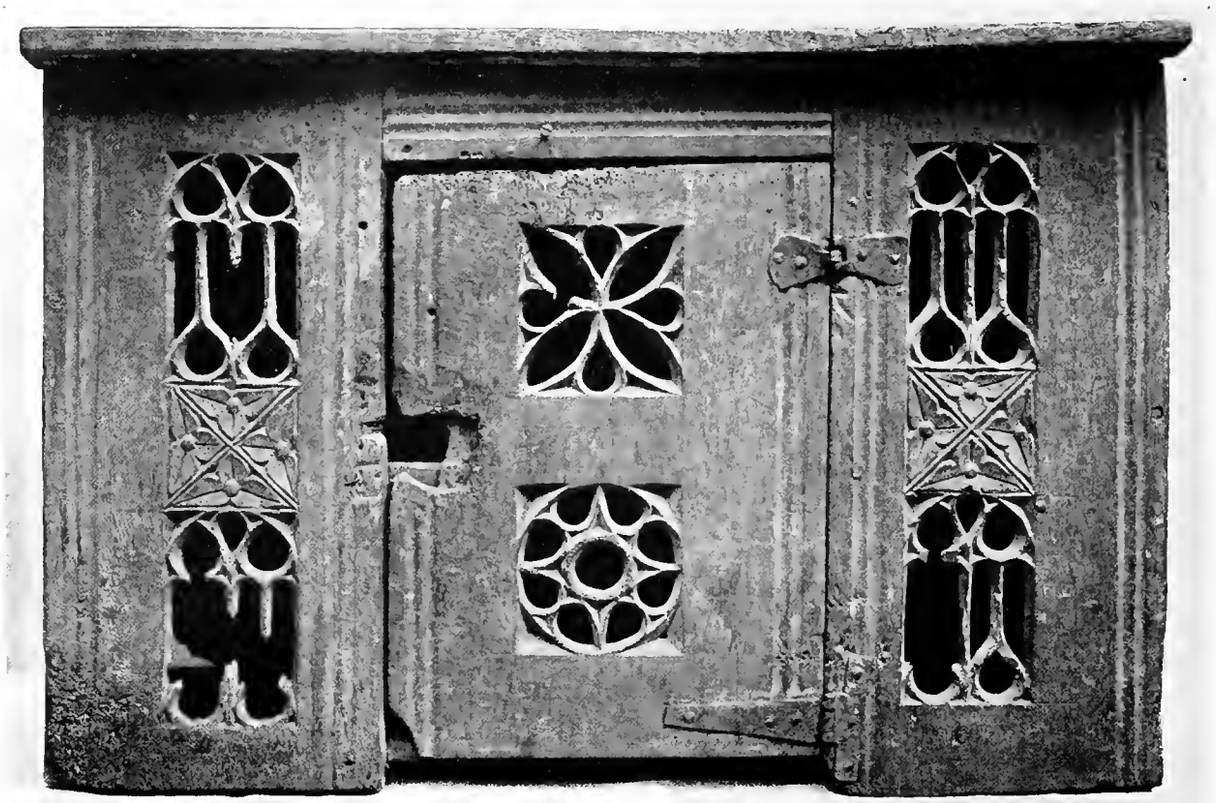


Fig. 37.

OAK DOLE CUPBOARD.

3 ft. 2½ ins. wide by 2 ft. 1½ ins. high by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.

Date about 1530. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 38.

OAK STANDING CUPBOARD.

5 ft. 4½ ins. high by 4 ft. 2 ins. wide by 2 ft. deep.

Mid-sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 39.

OAK PANEL.

3 ft. 0¼ ins. long by 7 ins. high.

Late fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 40.

OAK PANEL.

13¼ ins. high by 10 ins. wide.

Early sixteenth century.

Fig. 41.

OAK PANEL.

13¼ ins. high by 10 ins. wide.

Victoria and Albert Mnseum.

Fig. 42. Fig. 43.

OAK PANELS.

14 ins. high by 9 ins. wide.

Early sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

the probable national kinship of the three pieces. Chests with inlay, that is, with various coloured woods chopped into the solid ground, as distinct from marqueterie where the inlay is cut into veneers and both laid either with the veneering hammer or the caul, are not uncommon in England towards the middle of the seventeenth century. In Fig. 51 will be noticed one of late Charles I period, where the pilasters are inlaid with flagged towers, in somewhat similar fashion to the chests illustrated in Figs. 47 and 48. The turned feet are additions. A chest of this kind would probably be fitted with a cut-out plinth taking up the line of the moulding-breaks at the base. The arcades of the panels and the pilasters are carved with a flat veined running guilloche, in the East Anglian manner. Chests of this kind are frequently of uncertain nationality. They were extensively imported from Holland, which was the home of marqueterie up to the later

seventeenth century. It must not be assumed, however, that imported marqueterie from Holland necessarily resembles what we know here in England as Dutch inlay. There is no doubt that craftsmen in Holland made, especially for the English market, many of the inlaid long-case clocks of 1690–1710;—although quite in another fashion to that current in Holland,—as labels, which may be occasionally found inside the trunk-doors, attest.

It may be advisable, at this juncture, to leave the consideration of these late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century chests and to explain how it is possible, in a general way, to assign localities of origin, as well as dates, to many of the examples illustrated in the preceding and the following pages. We have a fairly sure, but not an infallible index of origin, in pulpits from the late fifteenth century onwards, as we know, as a rule, these would not be removed from the church for which they were made, once they were fixed. Unfortunately, the theory that these are always of local manufacture is not tenable; some of the Kentish woodwork in churches, even in villages well removed from the Thames, is not indigenous, but bears many indications of Essex or Suffolk

Fig. 44.

OAK BOX.

17 ins. wide by 7 ins. high by 12½ ins. deep.

Mid-sixteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

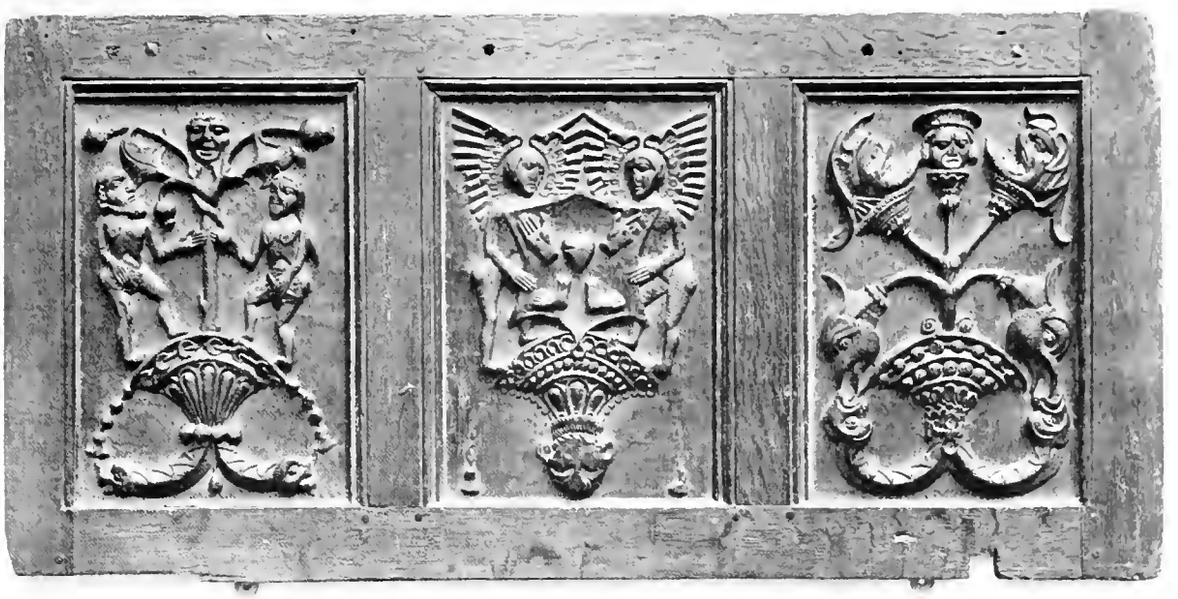


Fig. 45.

PANEL OF OAK CHEST.

3 ft. 8 ins. wide by 1 ft. 9½ ins. wide.

Mid-sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 46.

OAK CHEST.

Height, 2 ft. 1½ ins.; width, 4 ft. 1 in.; depth, 1 ft. 7½ ins.

circa 1560. Victoria and Albert Museum.

origin. Certain districts must have been renowned for their woodworking skill and style, particularly in the Gothic period, and workmen from these places would be called upon to provide such articles as pulpits, screens, benches and the like, if a church contemplated refurnishing by reason of added revenues or some unexpected bequest. This would not apply to the fifteenth century, and before, as woodwork in churches of that date bears many indications of being of local make and design, coupled with a friendly rivalry between neighbouring villages in the adornment of their parish church. Pulpits were by no means general, in English churches, in the fourteenth century, and none prior to 1330 are known to exist. At Fulbourne in Cambridgeshire is one of this date, but it is, apparently, unique. Examples from the end of the fourteenth century are

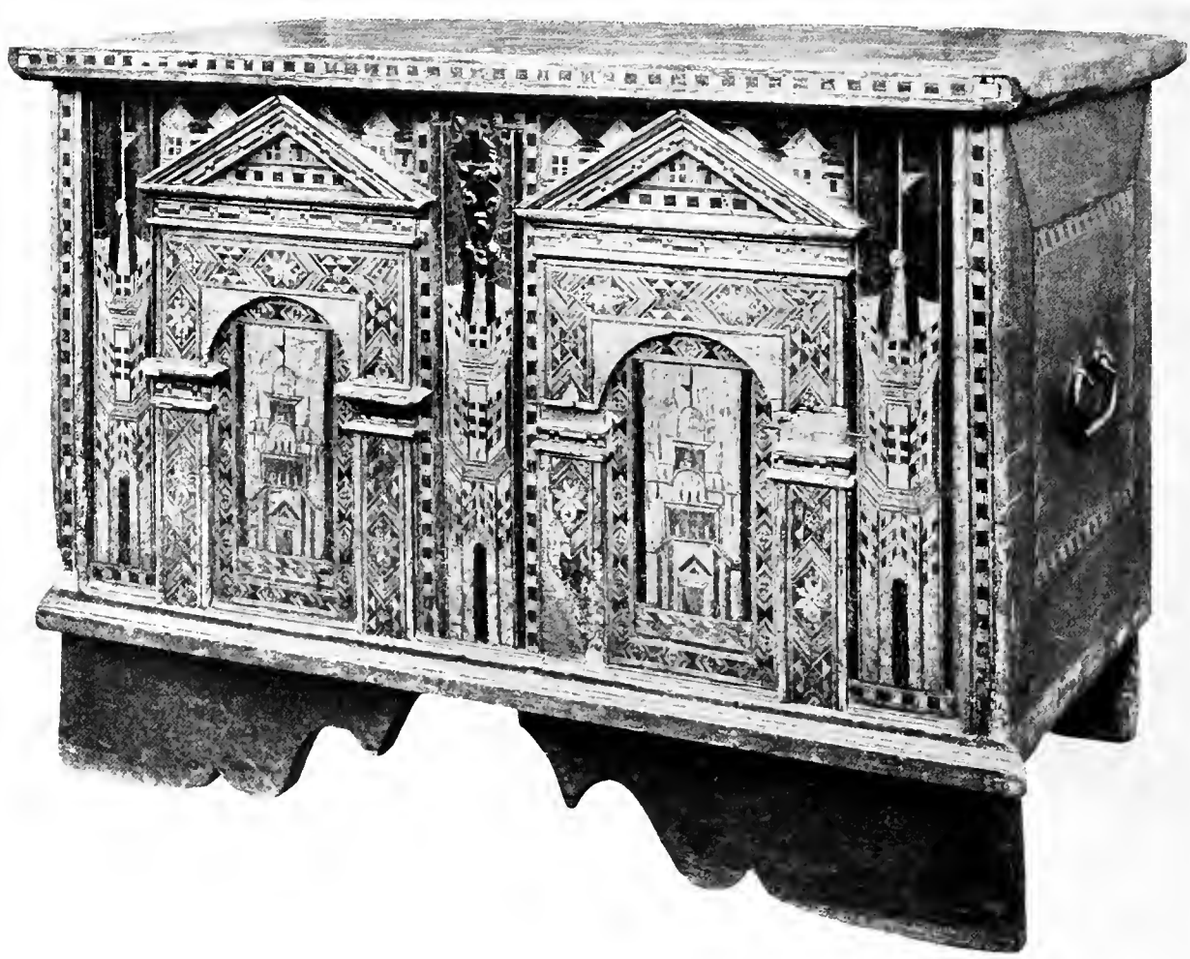


Fig. 47.

OAK CHEST INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE AND PARQUETERIE OF VARIOUS WOODS.

3 ft. 1½ ins. wide by 2 ft. 6½ ins. high by 1 ft. 8½ ins. deep.

Late sixteenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

also very rare. There is one at Upper Winchendon in Bucks, and two are known in Gloucester, at Evenlode and Stanton.

It is, however, from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, that pulpits begin to have an interest, for our present purpose, in establishing local manners and periods, as they either copy the pattern of the chest, coffer and cupboard-fronts of their time, or chests are, in turn, copied from them. In any case a fashion is inaugurated, and, in consequence, they become valuable as data. In addition, pulpits of the sixteenth century onwards are nearly always in the secular manner of their time; the Gothic remains only as a trace. Devonshire pulpits do not enter into consideration here. Not only are they exceptional in design,—frequently very richly ornamented,—but construction also varies, at the same period, from the primitive method of hewing and fashioning from the solid tree-trunk,—as in the very late fifteenth-century example at Chivelstone,—to the properly framed and panelled manner of eastern England of this period. Devonshire pulpits are, as a rule, not only locally made, but often at a much later date than their style would indicate, and they rarely follow the fashions in design which are current at this period in other parts of England. As a consequence they

Fig. 48.

OAK CHEST INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE AND PARQUETERIE OF VARIOUS WOODS.

4 ft. 1 ins. wide by 2 ft. 2½ ins. high by 1 ft. 9½ ins. deep.

Late sixteenth century. A. W. Frost, Esq.

are nearly always more spontaneous in type ; an artistic virtue, which, however commendable for many reasons, has the drawback of establishing no definite manner such as would render accurate dating possible, in the absence of preserved records. As a criterion of periods, or methods prevalent in their districts, these Devonshire pulpits are useless as guides in estimating dates, or in indicating localities of manufacture.

There is another reason why pulpits prior to the end of the sixteenth century are useless for the purpose which is intended here. They are rarely, if ever, true to the type of their period. It is common knowledge that the Gothic style has, in many localities, a fixed association with the Church, and any furnishings, whether of wood or metal, are, in design, limited to that style. There would be little to complain of, as a rule, were the Gothic properly understood, but, unfortunately, in nearly every instance, it is the worst possible travesty of the style which ignorance and the commands of economy can devise.

That this practice of using the Gothic long after the introduction of the Renaissance

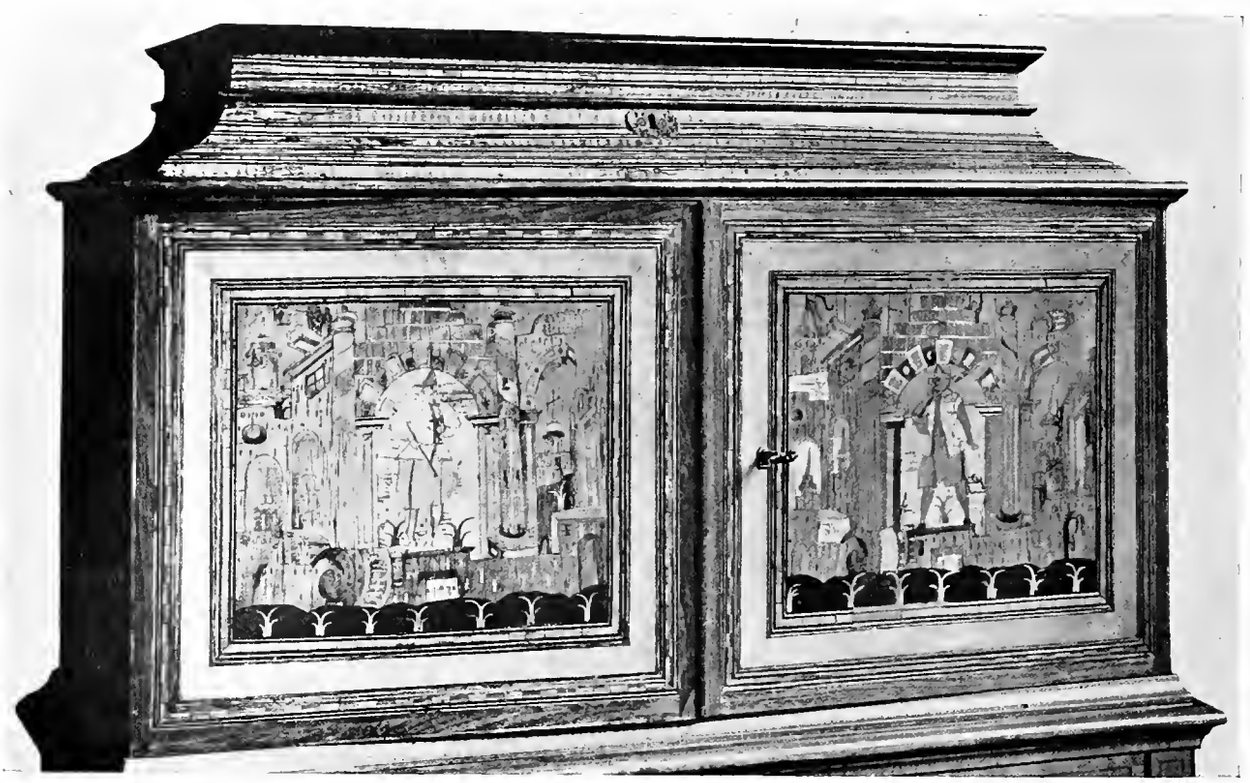


Fig. 49.

OAK CABINET INLAID WITH VARIOUS WOODS.

German, early seventeenth century.

Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

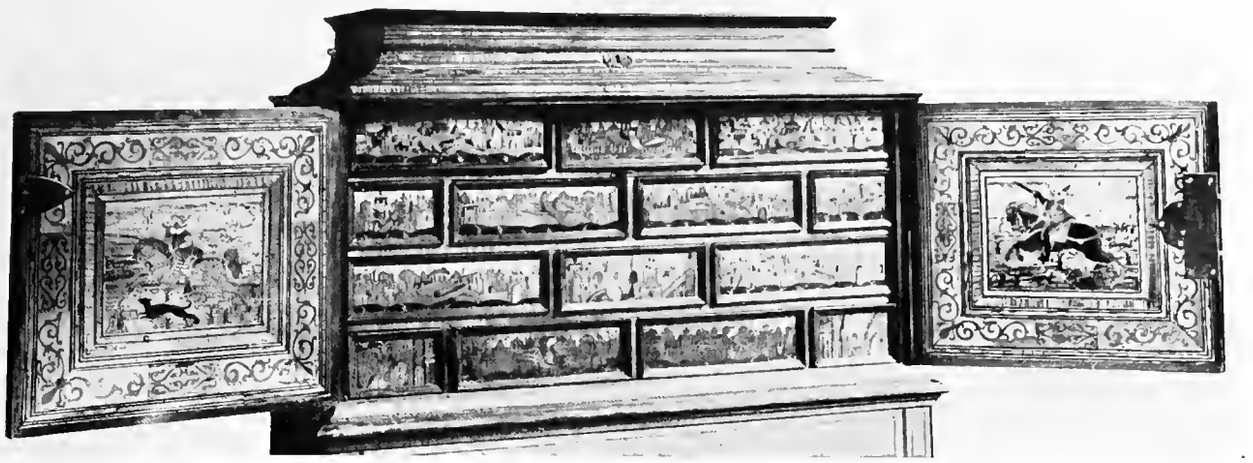


Fig. 50.
THE CABINET (FIG. 49) SHOWN OPEN.

had ousted it from general favour, even in churches, was still followed, is shown by such examples as at St. John's, Henley-in-Arden, Fig. 52, and Bramford, Fig. 53, where the panel-details of tracery or linenfold are early sixteenth century in style, while the system of framing and the moulding-sections indicate almost the other end of the century.

It is the Renaissance pulpits which are valuable for our purpose, as data for comparisons with secular furniture, as these pulpits were, as a rule, made in the height of the fashions current at the time. St. Nicholas Church at Ipswich has a pulpit, Fig. 54, of early seventeenth-century date and East Anglian or Home County in style. A comparison of this with the mantels from Lime Street, Figs. 332 to 335, Vol. I, and those from Eltham, Figs. 339 to 341, Vol. I, will show how the secular and the clerical examples corroborate each other. It is possible,—in fact, it is extremely probable,—that a pulpit of this elaborate kind was made in London or its neighbourhood. To state that this manner of using pilasters with downward taper, bosses or split-balusters of bog oak or fruit-woods, applied fretwork and architectural frames or tablets of key-cornered mouldings surmounted by pediments, either with or without akroteria, is a London style in its inception, can only be an error of too great a constriction of locality. If expanded to include parts of Essex, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Northern Kent, the statement may be regarded as more exact in application.

Yaxley pulpit, Fig. 55, shows the East Anglian use of the pilastered arcade and the split baluster, in conjunction with the gadroon. Occold, Fig. 56, Earl Stonham, Fig. 57, and Kelsale, Figs. 58 and 59, are all East Anglian pulpits of a general style familiar in chest and coffer-fronts of their period or somewhat later. Kelsale has a fine

pulpit, shown in larger scale in Fig. 59, which will repay close examination. There are details, from the dawn of the Renaissance in England down to the first quarter of the seventeenth century, which are used together with charming effect.

Great Bealings, Figs. 60 and 61, with its fine canopy, Brandeston, Fig. 62, of plain type, but made from quartered oak of choice figure, Stonham Aspel, Fig. 63, reminiscent of the panelled and arcaded chests of the first Restoration years, Witnesham, Fig. 64, which shows the reintroduction of the split-baluster coupled with the chamfered moulding and recessed panel, and St. Mary Quay, Ipswich, Fig. 65, which closes this series of East Anglian Stuart pulpits, are all typical of their date and locality. Tower Church, Ipswich, Fig. 66, has the Wren type of pulpit which may be of Suffolk, Essex or London make. At this date the classical manner in woodwork, which may be said to commence with the later years of Inigo Jones, tends to fuse the styles of many counties into one, and it is difficult to dissociate the work of each by the criterion of design only. An even more ornate and striking example of this Wren manner in pulpits can be seen at Attleborough in Norfolk, Fig. 67. The association of Wren and Gibbon is plainly evident here, although the design is, probably, not the work of the one nor the carving of the other.

Fig. 51.

OAK AND WALNUT INLAID CHEST.

4 ft. 1½ ins. wide by 2 ft. 2 ins. high by 1 ft. 8 ins. deep, back to front.

Date about 1640. John Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

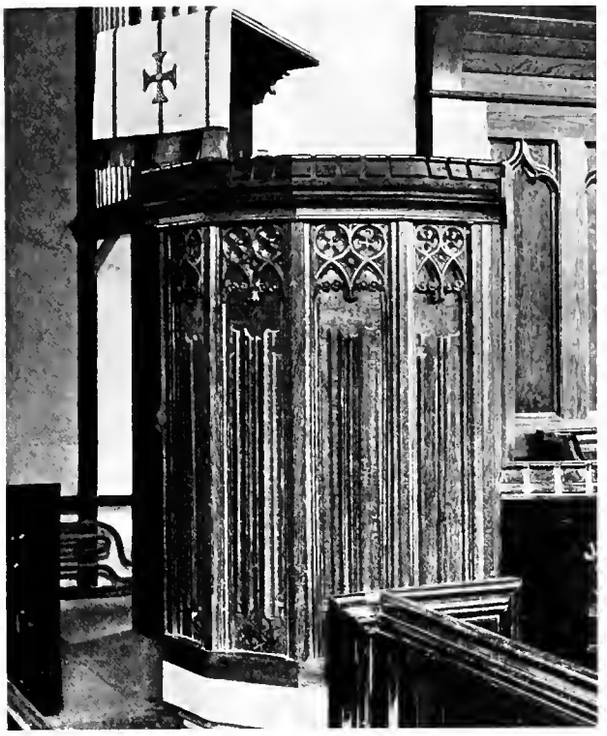


Fig. 52.

ST. JOHN'S, HENLEY-IN-ARDEN.

Warwickshire type of 1550.

Fig. 53.

BRAMFORD, SUFFOLK.

The East Anglian type of 1590.

Fig. 54.

ST. NICHOLAS, IPSWICH.

The East Anglian baluster-and-jewel type of 1600–10.

Fig. 55.

YAXLEY, SUFFOLK.

The baluster-and-jewel type of 1610.

Fig. 56.
OCCOLD, SUFFOLK.
The East Anglian arcaded type of 1610–20.

Fig. 57.
EARL STONHAM, SUFFOLK.
The Arcaded and Bossed type of 1610.

Fig. 58.
KELSALE, SUFFOLK.
The East Anglian arcaded type of 1620.

Fig. 59.
DETAIL OF THE PULPIT, FIG. 58.

EAST ANGLIAN PULPITS OF THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Fig. 60.

THE CANOPY OF THE PULPIT BELOW.

Fig. 62.

BRANDESTON, SUFFOLK.

The East Anglian arcaded type of 1640.

Fig. 61.

GREAT BEALINGS, SUFFOLK.

The East Anglian arcaded type of 1620.

Fig. 63.

STONHAM ASPEL, SUFFOLK.

1660.

THE SUFFOLK SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY TYPE OF ARCADED PULPIT.

Fig. 64.
WITNESHAM, SUFFOLK.
The East Anglian arcaded type of 1670.

Fig. 65.
ST. MARY QUAY, IPSWICH.
The reintroduction of the split-baluster. *c.* 1680.

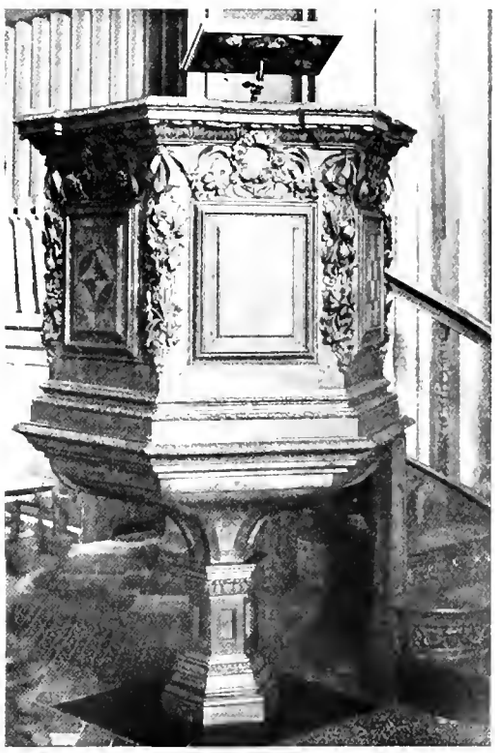


Fig. 66.
TOWER CHURCH, IPSWICH.
The Wren type of 1690–1700.

Fig. 67.
ATTLEBOROUGH CHURCH, NORFOLK.
The Wren type of 1700–10.

LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY EAST ANGLIAN PULPITS.

Fig. 68.

TAWSTOCK, DEVON. THE WREY PEW.

The Renaissance of the South-West. About 1550.

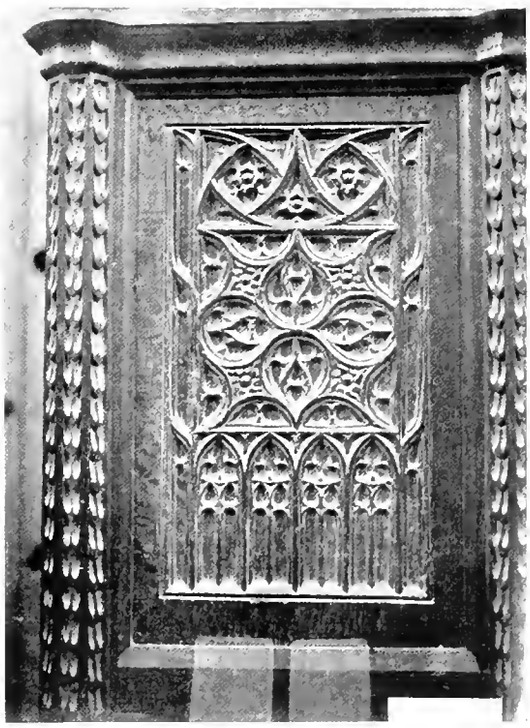


Fig. 69.

FRITTENDEN, KENT.

A Gothic panel now in the back of a chair.
(Very rare in Kent.)

Fig. 70.

ALDINGTON, KENT.

The Renaissance symbolical pulpit of 1550.

Fig. 71.

BIDDENDEN, KENT.

The Kentish manner of *c.* 1610.

Fig. 72.

DETAIL OF THE BIDDENDEN PULPIT.

KENTISH PULPIT TYPES.

Fig. 73.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
The Kentish type of 1660.

Fig. 74.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Detail of Fig. 73.

Fig. 75.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Details of Fig. 70.

Fig. 76.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Font-cover about 1640.

TYPES OF KENTISH WOODWORK.

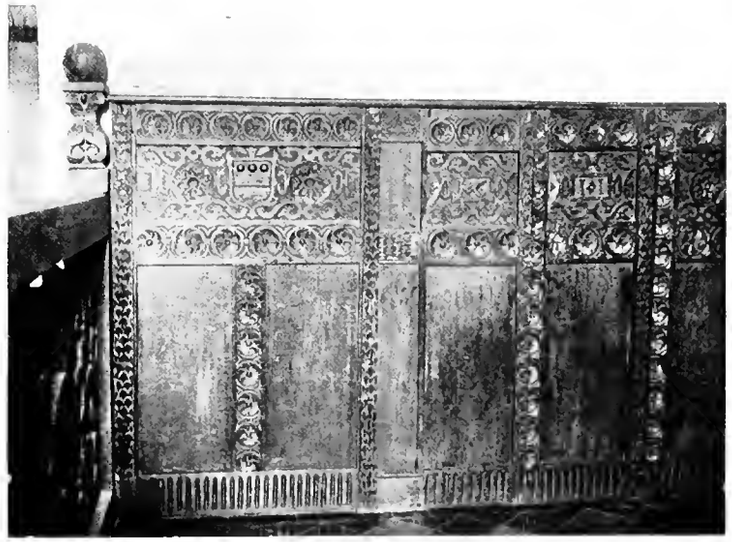


Fig. 77.
MERSHAM, KENT. (Dated 1611.)
The type of 1600–20.

Fig. 78.
MERSHAM, KENT. 1611.
Details of Fig. 77.

Fig. 79.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Renaissance detail of 1580–1600.

Fig. 80.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Pilastered woodwork of 1600–10.

KENTISH WOODWORK TYPES.

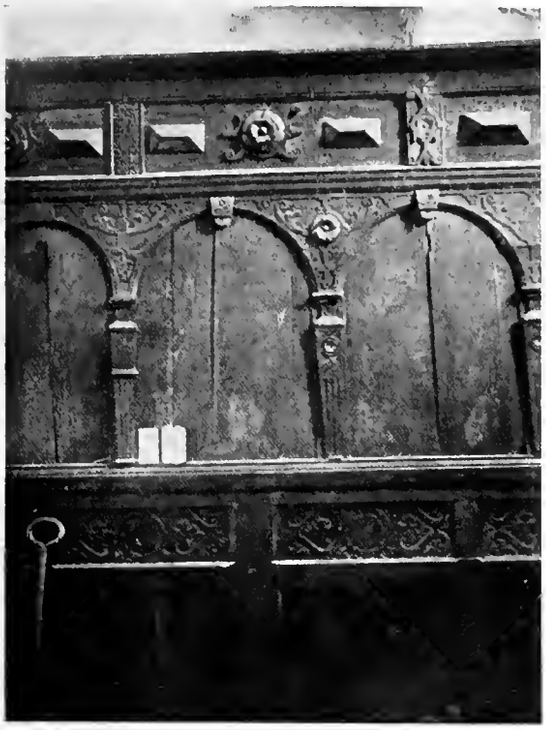


Fig. 81.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Details of the panelling, Fig. 80.

Fig. 82.
ALDINGTON, KENT.
Details of the panelling, Fig. 80.

KENTISH WOODWORK TYPES.

It is merely an example of the school of designing and carving which both helped to found, as exemplified in much of the woodwork in St. Paul's Cathedral and elsewhere.

The Renaissance of the South-West, whether in clerical or in secular woodwork, is nearly always richer in detail than in the East of England. It is also, as a rule, exceedingly varied, yet possessing marked characteristics which are typical and recognisable. Such examples as the fine Wrey pew in Tawstock Church, Fig. 68, may be cited as representative of the expression of the French Renaissance in Devonshire, examples of which have already been illustrated in the Exeter panellings, Figs. 312 to 316, Vol. I. So closely was the style assimilated, and so fine in execution and full in design are many of these Devonshire examples, that the hand of the French carver and designer has often been suspected, and with reason. In spite of this foreign character, very strong in such details as the balusters supporting the tester of this rich pew, there is no question as to its English origin, although French collaboration may be granted in its designing.

The Kentish and Eastern Sussex types of pulpits are not so defined as those of East Anglia, and this is due as much to a multiplicity of influences, and even of work imported from other countries, as to spontaneity in creation, with either no antecedent fashions or a mere jumble of details gathered from many sources. Thus the Gothic panel now in the back of a chair at Frittenden, Fig. 69, which may have been a pulpit panel, is strongly permeated with influence from Northern France or the Low Countries. The Gothic in church woodwork is rarely local, in the strict sense of the word. True, certain forms were adopted as favourite motives in certain parts of England at particular periods, but the influence both of the Church and of its workmen was too widespread before 1530 to allow of the style becoming localised in definite districts. It is comparatively easy, for example, to illustrate Gothic woodwork from Lancashire and to cite this as the Midland type, but this can only be done by ignoring other woodwork from a county far removed which exhibits similar designing influence. That the Gothic woodworkers

Fig. 83.

OAK CHEST.

Late sixteenth century. Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

copied from one another is obvious, and that this copying was from other examples which were readily accessible,—in the same county or district,—in the great majority of instances, is comprehensible, but to say that a locality such as Wales or the South-Western Counties,—where the Gothic does develop on very individual lines,—has its own style, meaning that there are no similar manifestations of it elsewhere, is sheerly absurd.

In its treatment of the Renaissance, Kent is much more individual than with the Gothic. At Biddenden, Figs. 71 and 72, is a pulpit which shows the characteristically Kentish treatment of the strap-and-jewel ornament which was imported from the outlying districts or suburbs of London.

Aldington, Fig. 70, has a fine and boldly carved pulpit, with the representation of the pelican feeding her young with blood from her breast,—styled, in heraldry, "a pelican in her piety,"—but it is doubtful if this, and other woodwork with which the

Fig. 84.
OAK CHEST.
Late sixteenth century. Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

Fig. 85.

WALNUT TWO-TIER SIDEBOARD.

Height, 3 ft. 11 ins.; width, 4 ft. 2 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 6 ins.

Late sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum

Church is over-furnished, is original to that edifice. This pulpit is evidently made up from old panelling. It is much more likely that it was removed from the ruined Aldington Priory, the refectory of which is now a part of the adjoining farm buildings. In the Church are fragments of screens both of late fourteenth and middle fifteenth-century dates, evidently from the same source. The present additional pulpit or reading desk (really the true pulpit of the Church), Figs. 73 and 74, and the very charming little font cover, Fig. 76, are no doubt original, although the font-cover is some fifty years later in date than the pulpit. In the latter, especially in the details given in Fig. 74, will be seen the Kentish manner of treating the arcaded and pilastered panel of which we have already illustrated examples from East Anglia. The coarse, yet vigorous flat cutting of Kentish ornament is shown, very clearly, in the case of the Mersham seats, Figs. 77 and 78.

Fig. 79, again from Aldington, is unusual in treatment for this part of Kent, being more typical of Rye or Eastern Sussex, but this work may not be original to the Church. The oak panelling in the chapel, Fig. 80, shown in larger detail in Figs. 81 and 82, has certainly been transplanted from a secular source, probably local, as the treatment of tapered pilasters and arcading is in the manner of this part of Kent. This woodwork is not of high quality, and it is in a very decayed condition, many of the panels being almost powdered away with dry rot and worm. The chapel in which it is, is very dark, and gloom always favours the development of rot and the fostering of the larvæ of the wood-beetle.

A difficult question arises, as to whether these pulpits were inspired from the chests of their time, or whether the process was reversed. In the case of the very early examples there is little doubt that the pulpit is prior to the chest of which it is the type, but towards the close of the seventeenth century, secular woodwork leads the way for the Church to follow.

Many of the oak chests of the

Fig. 86.
CARVED OAK BOX.
1 ft. 10¾ ins. wide, 1 ft. 10 ins. deep, 1 ft. 4¼ ins. high.
Early seventeenth century.
Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

later sixteenth century are really forms of the credence, cut down and fitted with a lid, in place of the original doors which are fixed as part of the front framing. Fig. 83, from Lyme Park, in Cheshire, is one which has this appearance. No marks of hinges show, but the central door was probably pin-hinged at top and bottom. The front is, obviously, cut at the top and at the bottom of the legs. The Gothic tradition still lingers in the details of the ornament. Fig. 84 is an original chest from the same source, of about the same date, and both are of local origin, either from Cheshire or the Lancashire border.

Towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth, the buffet and the standing, or court-cupboard, with pillars of bulbous turning, come into fashion, and add to the variety in English furniture of that period. Generally speaking, however, these bulb-turned pieces are of seventeenth- rather than of sixteenth-century date, as the pattern did not develop very fully, either in wall-pieces or tables, until after James I occupied the throne of England. The later sixteenth-century pieces, however, especially those of eastern-county origin, have a peculiar richness of detail and conciseness of execution, which is unmistakable when once apprehended. Thus in Fig. 85, a walnut buffet of choice quality recently acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum, the cushion-sectioned middle frieze, the bulbs, and the egg-and-dart top moulding are all carved with care and precision, yet without the stereotyped manner of the later seventeenth-century pieces. The top frieze and the base rail are inlaid with a chequer pattern of holly and lignum, and the back uprights have a kind of fluted imbrication which is novel and effective. Walnut is, of course, a very rare wood at this date, and its use, in a buffet of this kind, is still more exceptional. There is every indication, however, in the selection of this wood, and the fine character of the workmanship, careful

Fig. 87.
THE CARVED OAK BOX, FIG. 86.
Shown with lid open.

Fig. 88.
HANGING OAK DOLE CUPBOARD.
2 ft. 9 ins. wide by 1 ft. 10 ins. high.
First half of the seventeenth century. St. Alban's Abbey.

and yet not mannered, that this is an early piece of its type, probably dating from the last decade of the sixteenth century.

Of somewhat later date, but in very similar style to this two-tier sideboard, or buffet, is the charming oak box or desk illustrated here in Figs. 86 and 87. The carving of the sloping-hinged front, in bold relief, appears to suggest that this was rather an illuminator's colour box than a desk, and the nest of drawers was probably intended to contain the bladders of pigment or gold in powder or leaf form. The sloping front is finely carved with the royal arms of James I, which show that this example is of seventeenth- not of sixteenth-century date. The sides, above the reeded band, are somewhat crudely inlaid in the manner of the period. This box is the direct prototype of the later slope-fronted bureau.

With the next example we are introduced to the process of lathe-turning, in the fashioning of wood, and although turning is found in the chairs of the reign of Henry VIII, these " tourneyed chairs " were, evidently, a novelty, and much prized at that date, as they are frequently referred to in the inventories of the time, a distinction shared only with important chests of ornate character. That turning was an actual innovation

in the middle years of the sixteenth century would appear to be an established fact, yet it may be only a revival. There was little or no scope for its use in the earlier furniture, yet, in the chancel screens of the very first years of the fourteenth century, as at Chinnor in Oxfordshire, and at Southacre in Norfolk, the shafts of the columns under the traceried heads are of round section, if not actually lathe-turned. The early English aisle columns of stone would offer the suggestion, and, as we have seen, the woodworker copied the stonemason very closely in the early periods. It is probable, of course, that these round shafts were fashioned by hand, without the use of the lathe at all, and this is further suggested by the fact that the diamond-sectioned mullion, or shaft, rapidly ousts the turned column in the screens of the later years of the fourteenth century, and round balusters or shafts do not appear again. The diamond or square section would be obtained by workmanlike means, with the tools of that date, whereas round shafts, in the absence of the lathe, would be troublesome to produce, with very little decorative

Fig. 89.
OAK DOLE CUPBOARD.
First half of the seventeenth century.
St. Alban's Abbey.

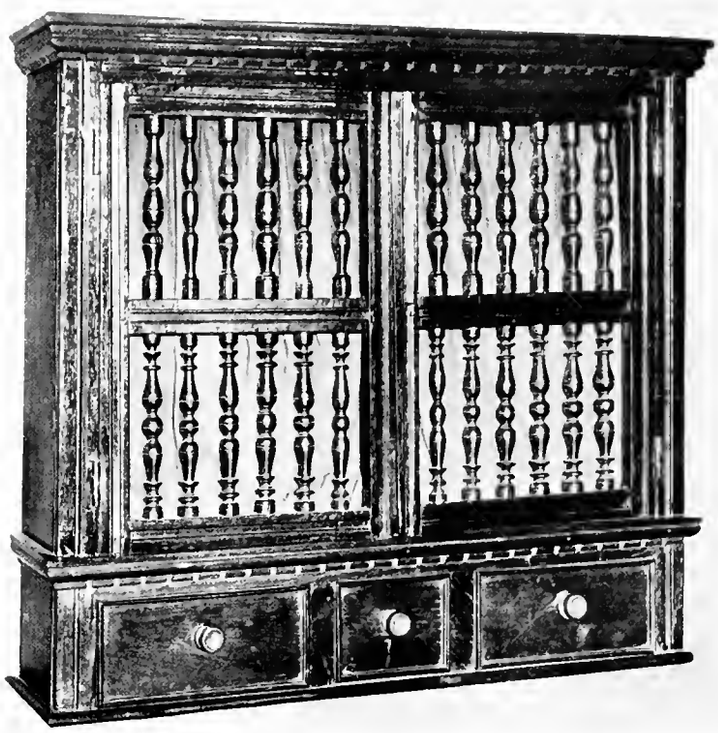


Fig. 90.
OAK AND PEARWOOD DOLE CUPBOARD.
Height, 2 ft. 6 ins.; width, 3 ft.; depth, 8½ ins.
Late seventeenth century.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

result to compensate for the time involved, yet the capitals, bases and neckings of the Chinnor and Southacre screens seem to imply either lathe-turning, or remarkable accuracy in the fashioning by hand.

In the early lathes the wood was "chucked" in the modern way, but the actual revolution was effected by a grooved wheel fixed to an outer prolongation of the right-hand shaft of the chuck. A bow with a loose string of gut was then wound once completely round the wheel, and the operation of drawing the bow smartly backwards and forwards, caused the wood to revolve. This bow-work was the province of the "bow-boy," the wood-turner's apprentice in his first year. Watchmakers at the present day sometimes use the same method for very small lathes. The cranked foot-lathe appears, however, early in the seventeenth century, but it is doubtful if the slide-rest, for spiral turning, was known before the middle of the eighteenth century, as many, if not all, of the "barley-sugar" twistings of the Restoration chairs are undoubtedly fashioned by hand from the plain turned shafts. The pole-lathe is of very early origin, and is used, to this day, in some country districts, especially in Buckinghamshire.

Fig. 91.
DOLE CUPBOARD OF DEAL.
Carved and inlaid.
Height, 2 ft.; width, 2 ft. 4 ins.; depth, 9 ins.
First half of the seventeenth century.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Lathe-turning loses its novelty in the early seventeenth century, but spindles and columns remain a very favourite device for many years. Often these balusters are split, and applied to flat surfaces as decoration, as we have seen. Many examples of this work will be noted in the illustrations to other chapters both in the earlier and in the later part of this book.

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century a number of small cupboards

were made, with open fronts partly filled in with turned balusters or spindles. They were intended either to be placed on a table, shelf or bracket, or to be fixed to the wall. Their probable use was to contain articles of food, for the keeping of which ventilation was necessary. Numbers of these cupboards are to be found in churches, as it was the custom, at this date, to distribute loaves and similar offerings to the poor of the parish, on certain stated occasions, in fulfilment of the terms of wills of charitable persons. One such gift, from the Skinners' Company, survived to recent times, if it has ever been abolished. These spindle-fronted dole-cupboards (for want of a better name) may have been made especially for such offerings, but this cannot be substantiated. Fig. 88, in the South Transept of St. Alban's Abbey, was undoubtedly used for such a purpose. Fig. 89 is from the same source. Both are designed with considerable taste, and the workmanship, especially the carving, is good. The spindles of the former are of the pattern of the later Charles I period. The latter may be earlier. The date, 1770, scratched on the right-hand bottom corner, is probably that of the commencement of a dole in accordance with a bequest. The cupboard itself cannot be later than about 1630, according to the style of the carving of the end visible in the illustration. Fig. 90 is another of these oak cupboards, considerably later in style, with three drawers below, beaded in the manner of the last decade of the seventeenth century. Fig. 91 is partly from deal, with arcaded panels, the framing inlaid with a chequered pattern and the top bracketted in imitation of miniature joist-ends, in the earlier timber-house fashion, here used as dentils only. This is a charming piece of the simple kind, of date about 1640, with pear-wood spindles of fine pattern, and the carving in very flat relief, almost like "poker-work." Fig. 92, made to stand

Fig. 92.
OAK HANGING CABINET.
Height, 2 ft. 6 ins.; width, 2 ft. 4 ins.; depth, 9 ins.
With rails of pear.
Mid-seventeenth century.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

on a table or shelf, and secured to the wall by nails through the tops of the back uprights, is in the form of a miniature buffet. It has all the appearance of East Anglian work of the middle seventeenth century.

Plain shaft-turning begins to appear in revived form shortly after 1605, but examples of this date are somewhat rare in tables, still more so in other furniture. Fig. 93 is an arcaded chest, with a lifting lid opening to a flat tray, and a central door. The chest is on a stand with flat-sectioned cushioned frieze, carved with a scroll pattern in

Fig. 93.
OAK CHEST ON STAND.
1630–40. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

low relief, in the style of about 1630–40. The legs are plain turned, the shafts ringed with an astragal at a third of their height. The bottom board is fixed to carved rails, tenoned into the squares of the legs, and pinned. The upper framings, the arches, and the pilasters, are all ornamented with a running guilloche pattern, and the panels have a chopped-in floral inlay. The ogival pilasters, acanthus-carved, and finishing in volutes over the lozenged triglyphs, are exceptional. This is a good example of the work of this date, of fine workmanship and home county origin.

Fig. 94.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

6 ft. 3 ins. wide by 5 ft. 1 in. high by 1 ft. 10 ins. deep.

Mid-seventeenth century.

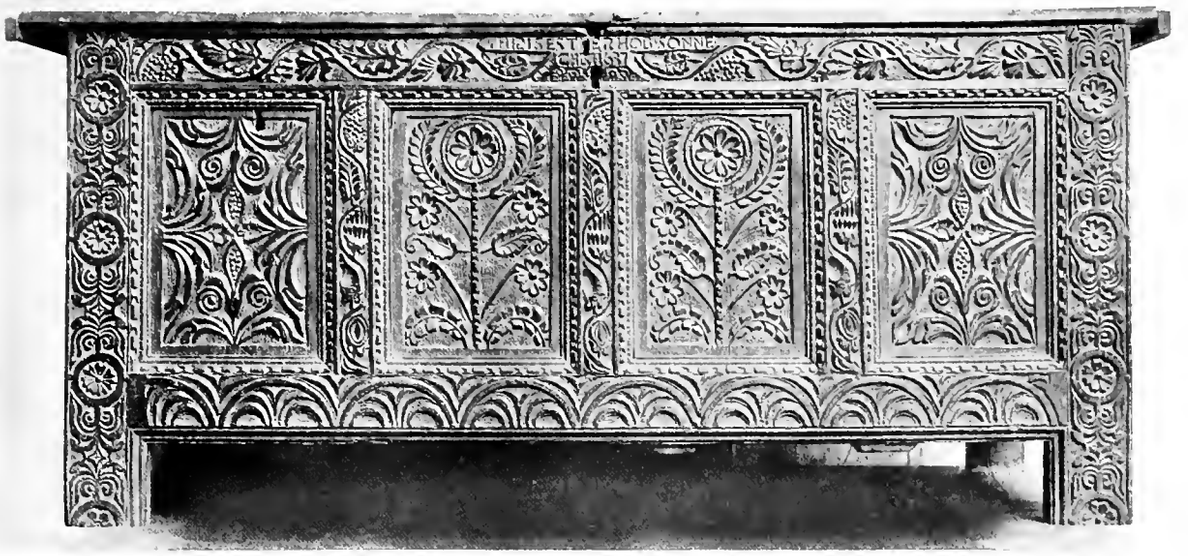


Fig. 95.

OAK CHEST, DATED 1637.

5 ft. 6½ ins. wide across front, 2 ft. 5½ ins. high by 2 ft. 2¼ ins. deep.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

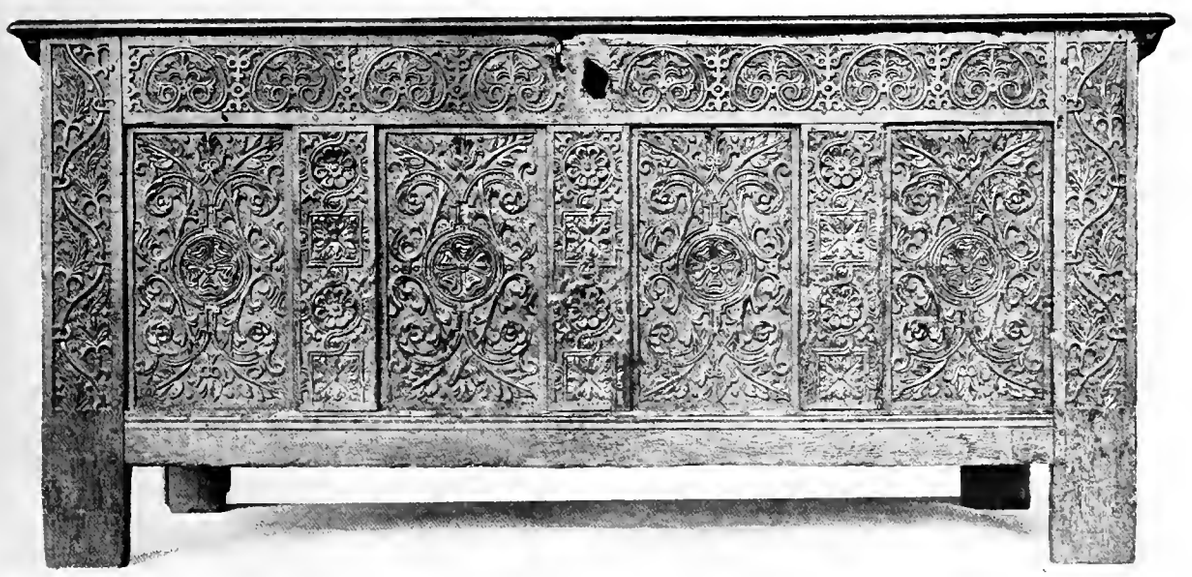


Fig. 96.

OAK CHEST.

5 ft. 8 ins. long by 2 ft. 8½ ins. high by 2 ft. 1½ ins. deep.

Date about 1640. Victoria and Albert Museum.

The large court-cupboard, Fig. 94, has a small guilloche motive introduced into the frieze above the lower doors. The upper frieze has the interlaced arcade type of carving, which persists from the late fourteenth century, as a decorative device. The top is formed of thin boards here running from one side to the other, but sometimes fixed the other way, either butted or tongue-jointed with the end grain of the timber visible on the front. The balusters are without carving, a restrained modification of the bulbous form, turned in the one piece with the scratch-moulded uprights. The rails have the scratch-beads and hollows running through from side to side, with no attempt at mitring with the upright styles. The upper doors have both mitred mouldings and framings. The upward facing edges of the rails are chamfered in the usual manner. Plain cupboards of this type, with simple balusters, can usually be referred to the Welsh bordering counties, Somerset or even northern Lancashire, but in the work of the latter county, fruit-wood, principally cherry, was generally introduced as a relief to the oak, in split balusters or ornaments of a similar character.

Chests made to stand on the floor still continued in favour during nearly the whole of the seventeenth century, but their numbers diminished when the cupboard, or the chest on a raised stand, came into vogue and offered a greater convenience. Towards 1680 the chest with drawers largely superseded the older form with hinged top, and the latter became gradually obsolete, in consequence. These middle seventeenth-century chests, with hinged tops, are frequently dated, in addition to the carving of the initials or names of the original possessors, and are thus valuable indications of period when the dating can be accepted as reliable and original, and not a later embellishment. Thus in Fig. 95, on either side of the upper, and later keyhole, is carved "THIS IS ESTHER HOBSONNE CHIST 1637." which is, approximately, its date. It is of midland county make, probably Cheshire, resembling Fig. 84 in general character. A suggestion of the last phase of the Gothic can be remarked in the frieze rail and the vertical styles. Fig. 96 is of about the same date, with carving of finer design and cutting. The French character of the Henry II period

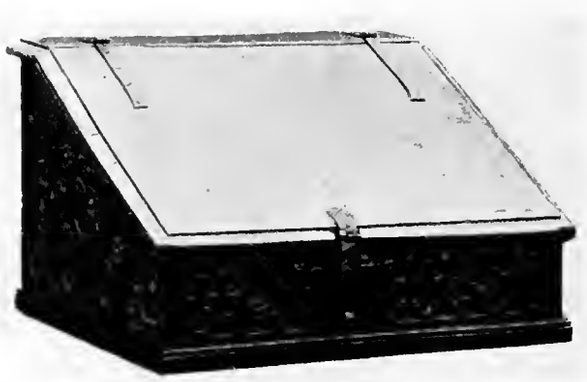


Fig. 97.

OAK DESK.

Height, 13 ins.; width, 22 ins.; depth, 16 ins.

Early seventeenth century.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 98.

OAK LACE OR RUFFLE BOX.

25 ins. long by 17 ins. deep by 8½ ins. high.

Early seventeenth century. H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

can be traced in the pattern of the three vertical styles, and in the panels themselves. This chest has the appearance of being of south-eastern county origin. It is too fine in quality for the Midlands, although similar patterns were used there. Every stem and guilloche-fillet in this chest is cut with the parting tool, and both design and execution show the greatest care. It is of much higher quality than Fig. 95.

Small pieces, such as portable desks, used chiefly by the travelling illuminator of manuscripts, and lace or ruffle boxes, frequently show the work of the first half of the seventeenth century at its best. A fine example has already been illustrated in Figs. 86 and 87. Fig. 97 shows the Elizabethan strap-motive on front and sides persisting to about the second decade of the seventeenth century, and Fig. 98 has a similar kind of ornament, but in the flattened low-relief fashion of the early years of James I. It is of later type, but is probably of the same or even an earlier date than the previous example. It is made from fine quartered English oak, in two stages, divided by a moulding of fine

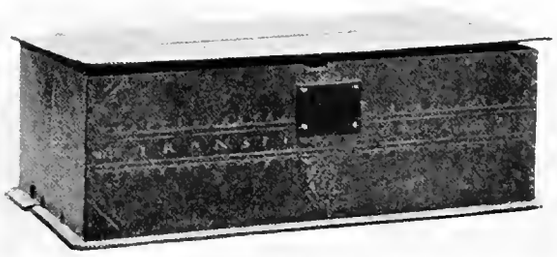


Fig. 99.

INLAID OAK BOX.

Early seventeenth century.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

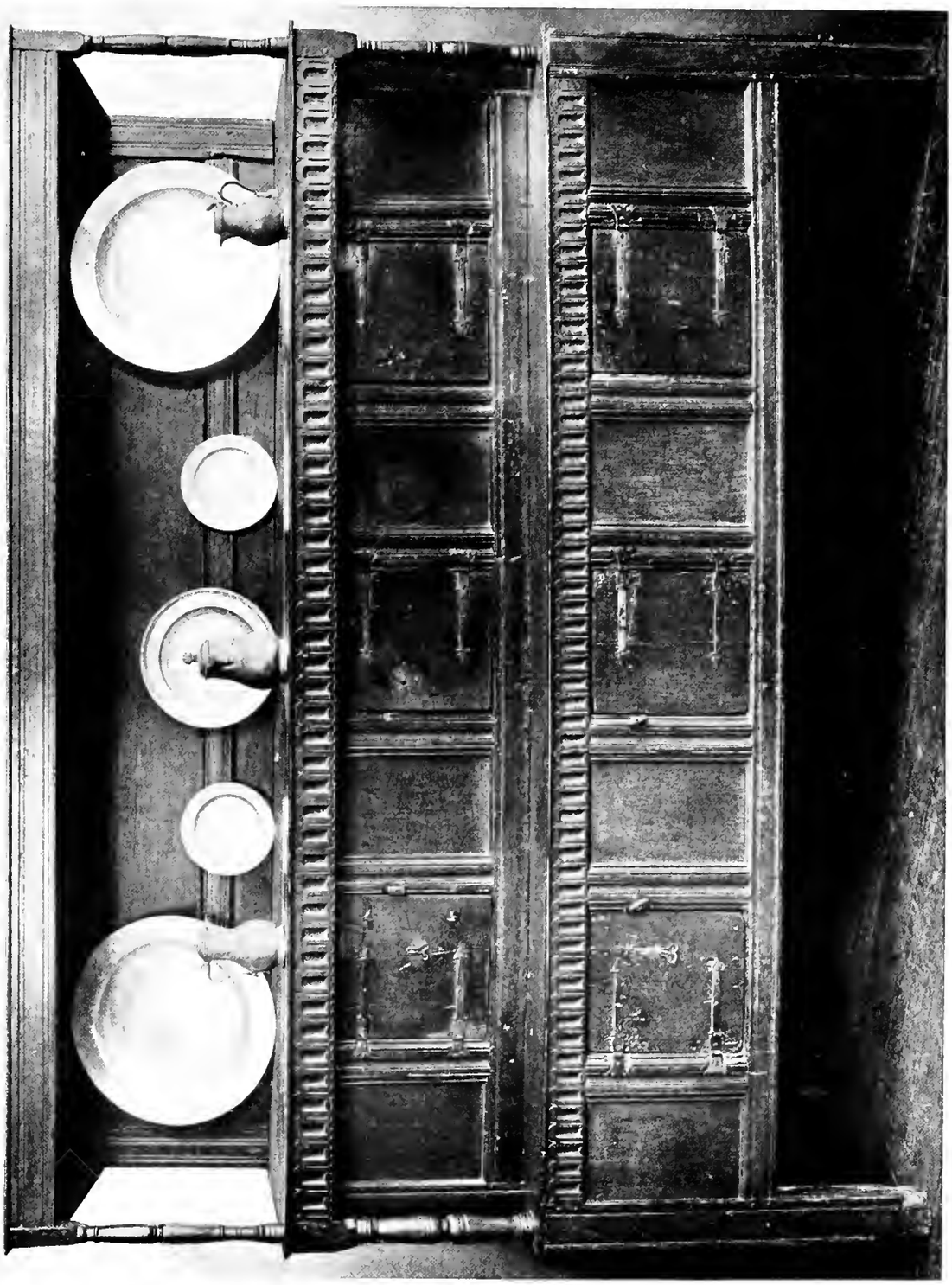


Fig. 100.
OAK COURT CUPBOARD.
Middle seventeenth century.
C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

Fig. 101.
OAK COURT CUPBOARD.
Middle seventeenth century.

C. H. E. Kinderman, Esq.

Fig. 102.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1680–90. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

Fig. 103.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1660–70. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

section, with free versions of the carved triglyph below. The lock is a later addition. Fig. 99 is difficult to date, although it is undoubtedly from the first half of the seventeenth century. It is veneered, with the motto, "Sic transit gloria mundi," inlaid in the central band.

The Welsh type of court-cupboard is almost a dresser in form, usually in three stages. The name "tridarn" has been coined to describe these "three-deckers." The

Fig. 104.
OAK COURT CUPBOARD.
Date about 1660–70. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 105.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1660–70. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 106.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1680–90. Messrs. Robersons.

balusters of these Welsh cupboards,—which include those from western Cheshire and Shropshire,—are nearly always plain-turned, without carving, and of slender proportions. The decoration is usually in the form of flutes, connected by surrounding incising, as in Fig. 100, or a foliated arching, in low relief, as in Fig. 101. The construction is

Fig. 107.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1660–70. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

generally not so finished as in the Home County or the East Anglian types, the doors either mere slabs of wood as in the first, or coarsely framed in panels, as in the second of the examples illustrated here. It is a general rule, but by no means an infallible guide, that the cruder the workmanship, the farther from the border on the Welsh side does the piece originate. Radnor and Denbigh occupied a very high place in the history of English woodwork in the fifteenth century, but this former glory had entirely departed in the seventeenth. The inlaid types of these Welsh three-tier standing cupboards, such as Fig. 102, are usually of finer character, but of considerably later date. Thus

Fig. 108.

OAK BUFFET.

4 ft. 4 ins. wide over top, 1 ft. 0½ ins. deep over top, 2 ft 0½ in. height of upper part, 4 ft. 2½ ins. total height.

Date about 1620–30. Cecil Millar, Esq.

this example is not earlier than about 1680, and may be some ten to fifteen years later. The chequered inlay is more pronounced, and with greater contrast of woods, than in the earlier inlaid specimens. It may be remarked, however, that the former fine traditions regarding the selection and cutting of the oak still persisted. It is rare, even in the crudest examples, to find other than selected quartered oak used in their manufacture.

Fig. 109.
OAK BUFFET.
Date about 1640–5. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 110.

UPPER PART OF BUFFET.

4 ft. wide by 1 ft. 6 ins. high by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.

Date about 1680. Cecil Millar, Esq.

The Lancashire types of these court cupboards are equally unmistakable to one who has studied many examples which have remained in situ in their county of origin. The difference between these and others from further south and south-west is rather subtle and difficult to explain by illustration alone. The oak, in many instances, either shows signs of staining with oxide of iron, or is naturally of more reddish tint than that of Shropshire. Mouldings are frequently of heavier section; not worked on the styles and rails, but planted on the panels and pinned to the framing. Fig. 103 is an example of this kind. The upper panels have a crude inlay of holly, box and fruit-woods, chopped in the solid oak. The doors above, open with their mouldings without surrounding framings, and the lock is on the cupboard styles, and locks into the door; a reversal of the usual custom. Figs. 104 and 105 show another peculiarity; a conventional ornament neatly grounded out, but with no carving relief, much the same as flat applied fretwork. Sometimes a little incising of the raised ornament is attempted, as in the upper frieze of Fig. 105, and a raised rebated panel ("fielded" is the usually accepted term) as in the lower doors, is occasionally, but rarely, inserted. The chief difference between the court-cupboards from varying localities is in general proportions, and these are difficult of explanation. The pendant acorn of Fig. 105 is a Lancashire device, and also the low upper-part in comparison with the carcase below. This characteristic is still further exemplified in the standing cupboard from Yorkshire and further

north. Fig. 106 is of this kind. The cornice moulding is a later addition, and rather spoils the general effect, as cornices of any kind are rare in these cupboards, the tops being closed in by a platform of thin boards, with the grain running from back to front, as pointed out before. These northern pieces are generally simple, with ornament very much in the Lancashire style, but the general proportions are heavier. They are also

Fig. 111.

OAK BUFFET.

3 ft. 9 ins. wide by 4 ft. high by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.
Date about 1670–80. Cecil Millar, Esq.

usually of late date, as a margin of from twenty to forty years must be added to the period of a prevailing fashion, in considering the probable age of north-country pieces. The thin top-boards to the lower part of these standing cupboards should be noted, as this peculiarity will be found in nearly every example illustrated, whether from north, south, east or west of England.

One fine type, and probably of south-western origin, is the court cupboard shown in Fig. 107. The carving is in very low relief, in some instances, as in the styles between the upper doors, almost of chip-carved character, and the ornament is employed in the

Fig. 112.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Date about 1660.

Fig. 113.

OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

6 ft. 1 in. wide by 4 ft. high by 1 ft. 11 ins. deep.

Dated 1637. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

form of long bands, of which there are six from the existing portion of the top cresting to the bottom guilloche-carved rail of the lower carcase. The bulbs are heavy and plain, without squares either at the top or bottom, and secured merely by dowels. The provision of two drawers above the lower doors is unusual in these cupboards, and the raised bead or jewel decoration of the fronts is exceptional in the work of the south-western counties. There is a fine subdued richness in the whole character of this example which is almost typical of Devonshire or Somerset work. The same character can be noticed in the oak bedstead from Great Fulford, shown in Fig. 396 of Vol. I.

Sideboards or buffets of the early seventeenth century, of two stages, with bulb-turned balusters on the outer corners, as already illustrated in Fig. 85, are rare, but where the upper tier is enclosed by a central door, with panelled flanks on either side splayed at an angle to the uprights of the back,—angle-buffets as they are usually termed,—they are still more exceptional. Fig. 108 is a choice example of this kind, the lower stage somewhat restored, as one nearly always finds in these early seventeenth-century oak pieces. The upper stage is fixed to a thin shelf or platform, and rests on the lower part, without dowels or other fixing. Of Essex or Suffolk make, this is a very fine example both of its period and locality. Fig. 109 is another of these angle-buffets, of somewhat later date and not so vigorous in execution.

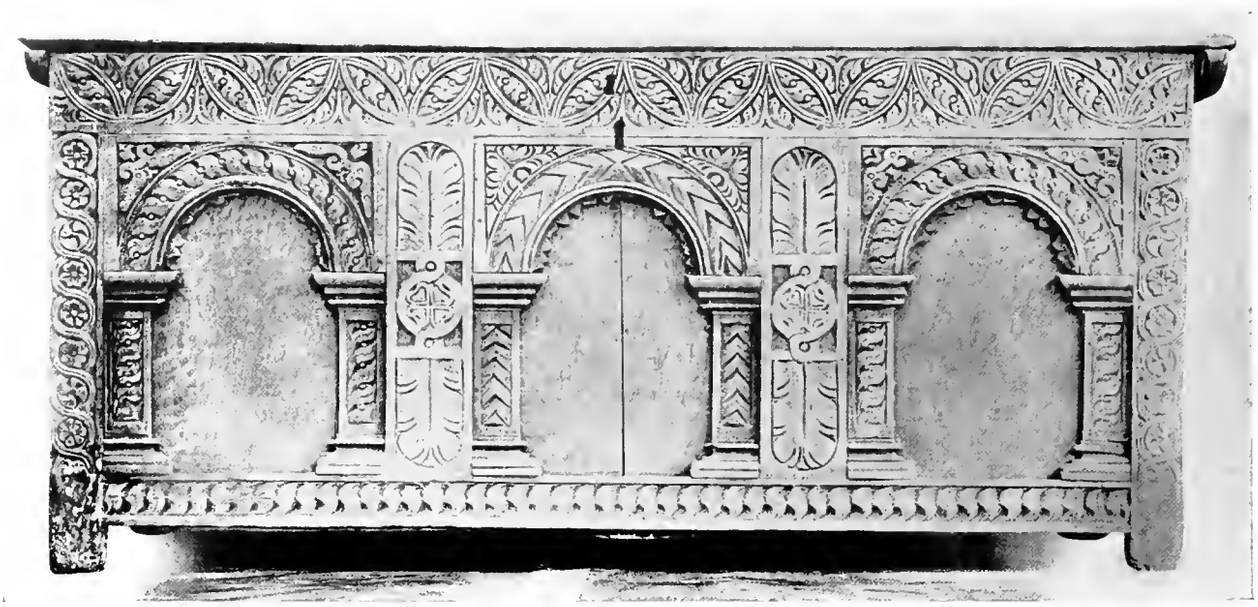


Fig. 114.
OAK CHEST.
Mid-seventeenth century. C. H. Woodruff, Esq.

The East Anglian work of the later seventeenth century is distinguished by accurate proportioning and fine detail, allied with a strong and unmistakable Dutch influence. Considering the close intercourse between Norfolk and Suffolk and the Low Countries, this is in no way remarkable, but it requires a nice discrimination to differentiate between pieces made here under Dutch influence (frequently the work of foreign artisans) and those which were actually imported. Fig. 110 is the upper part of a small buffet, the lower stage of which has disappeared. It is without carving, and has many details, such as the bulb-turning of the outside balusters, the twisting of the half-balusters flanking the central panel, and the applied half-bosses of the frieze and its keystone trusses, which suggest Holland rather than England. The panels are painted in imitation of the scrolled marqueterie which was coming into fashion at this period, but the colours have faded, with the exception of the red berries in the design, which are still bright. The whole piece is exceptional and interesting.

Still more strongly permeated from Dutch sources, although undeniably of English

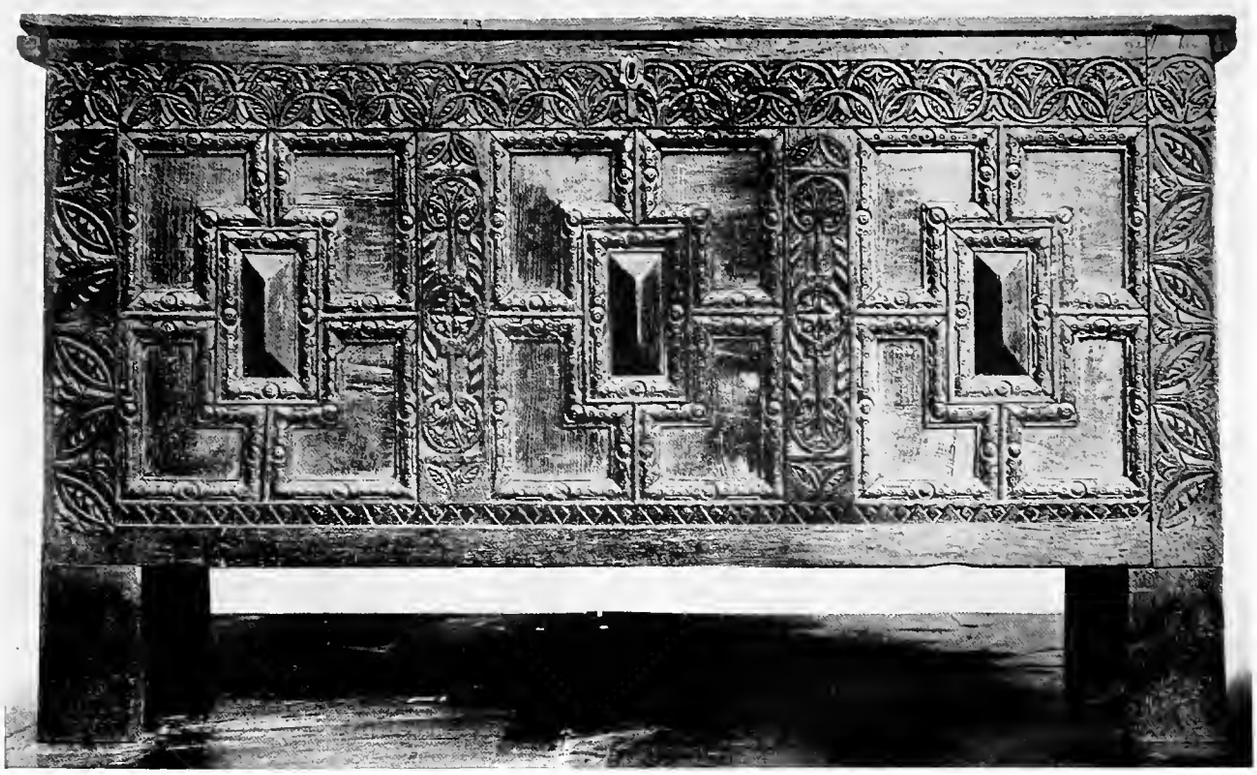


Fig. 115.
OAK CHEST.
Date about 1665. C. H. Woodruff, Esq.

make, is the open buffet shown in Fig. 111. The cushion-moulding of the two friezes, divided by fine double beads, and especially the downward tapering of the bulbs, are details typical of East Anglian work, and this form of turning will be found in several of the legs of the tables illustrated in the next chapter. The bottom board here has been restored, but the buffet is, otherwise, original and a fine example of its district.

Fig. 112, which is East Anglian work of about the date of the Restoration, has

Fig. 116.
OAK CABINET
Date about 1650–60. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

also suffered by being fitted with turned feet, and a later bottom rail, at a date subsequent to its original manufacture. The Norfolk type of strap-hinge will be noticed. These hinges, of wrought iron, are original in this example, which is rarely the case at the present day. The panels in the upper stage are fitted with pilastered arches, very finely carved, alternating with the "inner-frame," or key-centred forms constructed by framing, in mouldings only, one rectangular panel inside the larger one. This type of panel-decoration, in which twenty internal and four external mitres are needed for each complete panel, became a very favourite pattern after about 1660, but is somewhat rare in furniture prior to this date, although in panellings the detail is used at a much earlier period. The rich double-moulded framing of these panels

Fig. 117.

OAK CABINET.

Date about 1660–70. A. Cubitt, Esq.

is worthy of careful note. The entire piece, with the exceptions noted above, is in fine and original condition, and of the highest quality even for its locality and period. The oak has been varnished, and is now a rich mellow golden brown in shade. The piece originally finished on the floor on three square stumps, prolongations of the outside and central uprights, but these were, probably, decayed when the present turned feet were substituted.

The next example, Fig. 113, is of the Midland type, and is probably now, in a room in a house at Henley-in-Arden, not far from its original county of origin. Here are the East Anglian arcaded and pilastered panels, but treated in quite another fashion, with ornament much more closely drawn and flattened in execution. This cupboard is squat for its length, but it has never been higher. It is early for its type, if the carved date

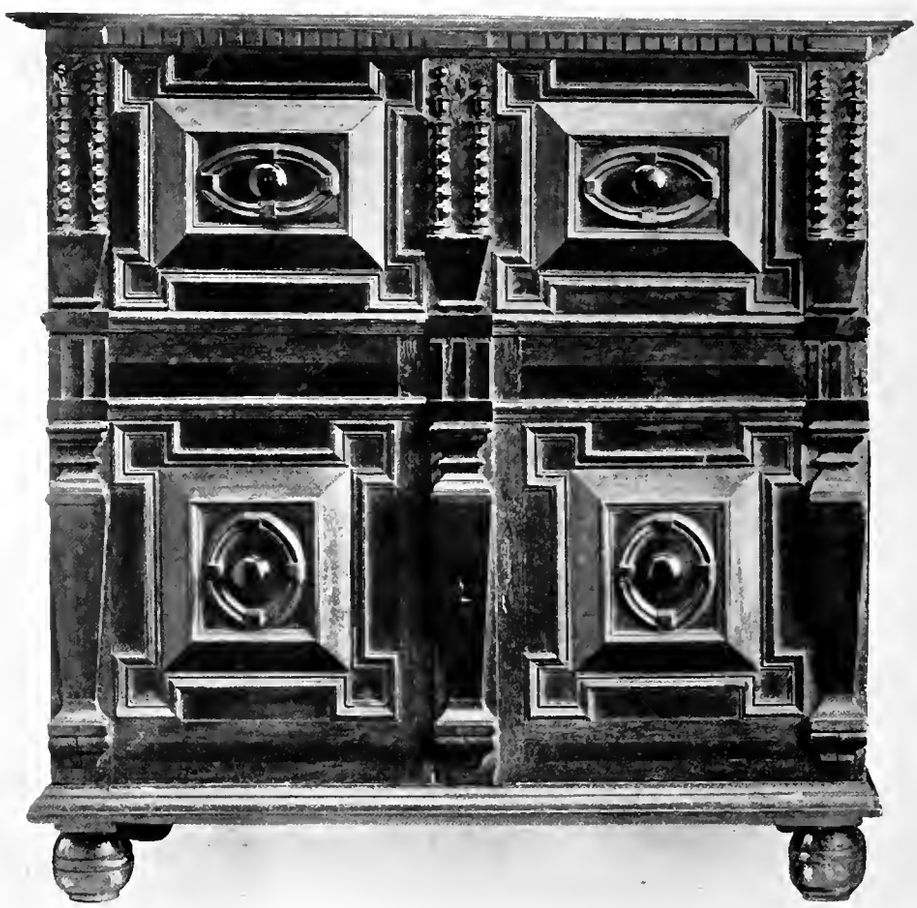


Fig. 118.
OAK AND WALNUT CABINET.
3 ft. 9½ ins. high by 3 ft. 5¾ ins. wide.
Date about 1670. W. Evans, Esq.

is to be relied upon, and there is no obvious reason to doubt this, as the piece is original and there would have been no purpose to be served in carving a date prior to its actual period upon it. The band immediately under the carved date emphasizes its Western-Midland origin, and the double-flattened scrolling on either side of the date copies a type of chair-cresting usually found on Warwickshire chairs. One might, with considerable reason, guess that Coventry or its neighbourhood was the locality from which this court-cupboard originally emanated.

The chest, Fig. 114, has the appearance of Kentish work of the Rye or Romney

Fig. 119.
OAK CABINET.
Date about 1670. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Marsh district, as the French type of the two central uprights, the flattened leaf with fillet, twisting to a central guilloche encircling a round representation of the Tudor rose, and the chevrons of the central arch and its pilasters below, are quite in the manner of some of the preserved Kentish work of this district. Intercourse between the southern Kentish coast and France was irregular, and of varied character, since the days when the French rovers partially burned Rye Church and pillaged the country round. Reprisals followed on Calais, quite in the modern approved manner, yet a good deal of the artistic influence of France was assimilated by the woodworkers of Rye, as much of the original work still to be found in small houses in that ancient town bears witness.

Fig. 120.

OAK AND FRUIT-WOOD CABINET.

Date about 1670. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

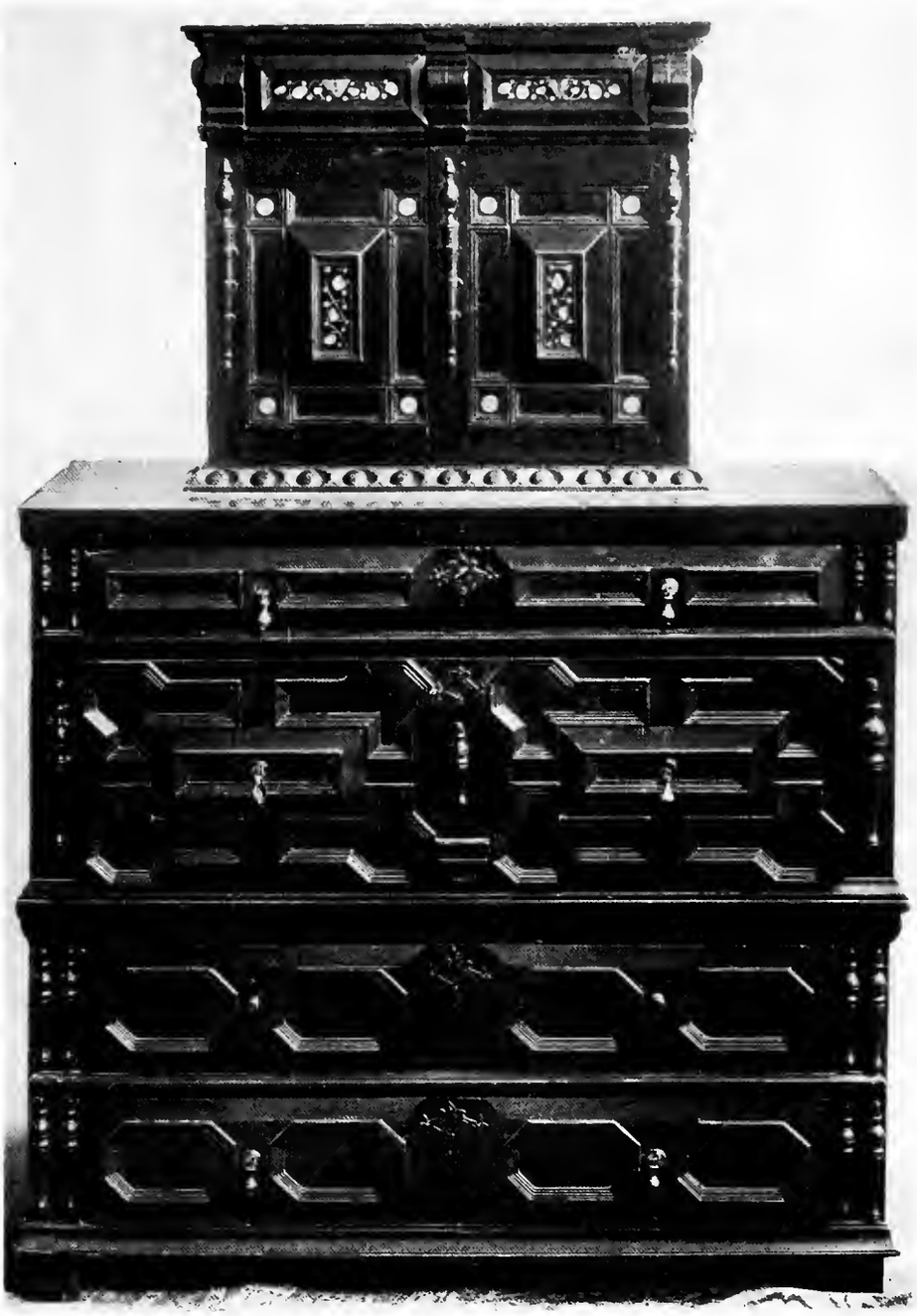


Fig. 121.

OAK INLAID CUPBOARD.

OAK CHEST OF DRAWERS.

Date about 1670. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

It is true that many of the French details were adopted at a much later date than their vogue on the other side of the Channel, but they were rendered, in almost every instance with considerable fidelity.

With Fig. 115 we revert to East Anglia again, and the years following the Restoration. The front of this chest is a rich example of the inner-frame panelling referred to at a previous stage, with the central small panel facetted and carved from cherry wood, stained to a darker shade. A curious detail may be noticed with a magnifying glass. In Chapter III of Vol. I, an account was given of the method of cutting oak in the manner known as "quartering," that is, where each board was cut at a slight angle to the medullary ray. It was pointed out, at the time, that to cut the wood exactly

Fig. 122.
OAK INLAID CHEST.
Date about 1670–80. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

parallel with the ray, caused the surface to wear unevenly, as the hard ray-figure resisted wear better than the softer surrounding wood. The river, who splits, instead of sawing his timber, usually aims at riving exactly on the ray itself. The front of this chest has been constructed from this riven oak, and the riving marks, and the signs of unequal wear, can both be seen in the flat panels in the illustration. This chest, with its almost barbaric richness of decoration, may be referred to mid-Essex, and a date between 1660 and 1670.

Although a decoration of split and applied turned balusters or bosses is early,—in Elizabethan examples it is usually known as " strap-and-jewel " work,—it is a mistake to assume that this is an indication of late sixteenth or early seventeenth-century work, when coupled with an elaborate mitring of mouldings. Thus Fig. 116 cannot be referred to a period prior to 1650 for this reason, if for no other. It will be noticed that this cabinet is elaborate, yet quite without carving. This fashion, of complicated mitring of mouldings, is borrowed from the Italian frames of the period, and is the indication

Fig. 123.
OAK INLAID CHEST.
Date about 1685–90.

an attempt, during the later Commonwealth period, to establish a style which should conform to Puritan severity, and yet be decorative without the use of carving. Thus key-corners to framing-mouldings, raised chamfering of panels, and applied split balusters or bosses, became a fashion so popular that it persisted after the Restoration,—although anything of Puritan origin was anathema to the new Court,—with the addition of inlay of ebony, sycamore, holly, bone and mother-o'-pearl. It is difficult to assign any locality of origin to much of this work. It appears to have been made, equally, in districts as far removed as Lancashire and Middlesex, and Norfolk, Suffolk and northern Essex adopted the new manner with avidity, some of the finest work being produced

Fig. 124.

OAK CHEST ON STAND.

3 ft. 1½ ins. wide by 4 ft. 0½ ins. high.

Date about 1690–1700.

in East Anglia. It is doubtful if the style ever penetrated into the south-western counties, however.

Many examples of these chests and cupboards, exhibiting the same details, could be illustrated here, did not space-considerations preclude more than a representative selection. Fig. 117 has the inner-frame pattern of panelling with mitred mouldings, the rectangular central panels projected, with heavy chamfers of snakewood. Fig. 118, from Forde Abbey, has the split-balusters, bobbin-turned, above, and square-section moulded pilasters below. The corners of the panels have the mouldings mitred in the familiar key-cornered pattern as in Fig. 116. The ovals in the door panels, divided into quarters by chamfered keystones, are in the somewhat feeble manner of 1670,[1] and the knobs,—which are not original, but probably replaced others of similar form,—are used with considerable effect. This press opens with two doors only, which are hinged on the ends. The central pilaster is carried on the right-hand door, a device which indicates the last thirty years of the seventeenth century, and one borrowed from Dutch and German sources at this date.

The next example, Fig. 119, is difficult to localise, although it is of post-Restoration date. The four doors are decorated to give a perspective appearance to the panels, which are inlaid with bone and mother-o'-pearl. The Dutch origin of these pieces has been often suspected, and this example gives colour to the suggestion, especially in such details as the projection of the central panels, and the illusory recessing of these on either side. Constructional details, however, show that this press is of English make and origin.

Fig. 120 is the Western-Midland version of this style of elaborately mitred mouldings. A comparison of this with the East Anglian chest, Fig. 121, will show the greater refinement of the latter. The small cupboard above has the key-corners, as in Fig. 118, with panels of bone inlaid in a ground of ebony. The type of split-baluster, strapped to its ground, which is often found in furniture and woodwork of the early seventeenth century, and which persists as an effective and inexpensive form of decoration until about 1680, will be noticed here.

Fig. 122 has the same type of inlay and split-baluster, with a fretted and bossed capping, and appears to be of Shropshire origin. The feet and the lock-plate are additions from the next century. Fig. 123 is the highest development of this type as exhibited in the work of Norfolk or Suffolk, of the years between 1685 and 1690.

[1] The device itself is earlier, and can be noticed in the overmantels from Lime Street, illustrated in Figs. 332 to 334 in Vol. I.

It is rare to find low chests, with lifting lids, and without drawers, at this date, and in this respect the type is early, but in design, finish, and refined elaboration, it may be regarded as the last and best phase of this intricately moulded and inlaid style.

Fig. 124 closes this series of chests and cupboards and carries us to the last years of the seventeenth century. Here we have the same elaboration of moulding, in a chest fitted with three drawers, mounted on a stand with turned legs and feet, flat-stretchered in the fashion of 1690–1700. We reach, with this example, the walnut period, and although oak was still used until the close of the century, veneering with walnut and saw-cut marqueterie (as distinct from either the older inlay or parqueterie), was becoming general, with the result that examples of oak, plain walnut, and marqueterie, of apparently totally different stages in the evolution of English furniture, are met with, and from the same localities, which coincide in point of date, in spite of superficial indications to the contrary. This chest of drawers on its stand has an amount of quiet but effective embellishment. The escutcheons are crested with a royal crown flanked by supporters, and are of solid silver. In the centre of the bottom drawer of the upper carcase is the device of a hand grasping an ear of wheat, and a spray of oak leaves with acorns. Initials are carved in four places, the upper two " J.T." and " O.T." being probably original to the piece, while the others, " J.C.E.T." and " S.V.E.T." are later. The middle drawer, with the earlier initials, however, has somewhat the appearance of being an interpolation, differing even in the style of the coupled split-turned balusters on either side. The escutcheon-pattern is the same, but all the metal work is of early eighteenth-century design, and is probably an addition. This chest and its stand may be taken as the last phase of the oak furniture of the seventeenth century, and thus concludes this series, leaving the consideration of the next development, the walnut furniture of William III and Anne, to be deferred to a later book, where it is intended to carry this history of English furniture and woodwork to its logical conclusion, the close of the eighteenth century.

Chapter II.

The Progression of English Oak Tables.

AT the outset of each of the preceding chapters the plan has been adopted of commencing with a definition of the terms which it is proposed to use, with the idea of demonstrating what is included and also what is excluded. Tables, far from offering an exception to this practice, require exact definition, if we are to exclude such articles as chests and similar articles, which, although in no sense of the word tables, were frequently used as such. The name "table," in fact, implies both an article of furniture and a function (i.e. a piece which serves as a table, but is not really one). Strict definition, therefore, becomes not only desirable, but also necessary, if confusion is to be avoided. Some overlapping of types, in the case of cupboard-tables, or chair-tables, is inevitable, and it is often a nice point to determine whether such pieces should be referred to as chests, cupboards or chairs. The limitation, thus implied, can be expressed in the clearest manner, by a recital of the types which shall include all the various descriptions of tables, to be illustrated in this chapter. These may be roughly summarised as follows :—

(1) Trestle tables, composed of tops, supported at their ends, or if of great length, at intervals, by vertical boards, or constructions of boards, placed at right angles to the length of the top, e.g. Fig. 125.

(2) Trestle tables, where the supports are at the centre of each end, but with stretcher rails fixed parallel to the length of the top, generally on its central line, the trestles having cross-pieces, on the floor level, to give stability, e.g. Fig. 127.

(3) Tables with turned or square legs tenoned into framings at the corners, with a top of some overhang. The number of these legs is dictated by the size of the table, e.g. Fig. 132.

(4) Tables of variable length, or with extending tops. This type includes the draw-table, where an additional section can be pulled out at each end from under the main top, to increase its length, e.g. Fig. 129, or those with hinged fall-down or fold-over flaps such as the gate-leg or the folding card table.

(5) Tables with central turned legs, usually of heavy type, placed centrally under the top on its length, supported on cross-pieces on the floor. (Genuine tables of this kind are excessively rare.)

(6) Tables, usually small, which are supported on a central pillar, with either a heavy base, or a tripod. These are usually, if not entirely, of the later eighteenth century, and will not concern us in this chapter.

There are many examples which are merely variations of the foregoing, such as the triangular table with three legs, the hexagonal with six, etc., and also the hybrid forms of the chair-table or bench-table, with a hinged top to form a table when down and a back to the chair or bench when raised. This latter type will be found in the chapter devoted to chairs. Distinction of purpose, e.g. dining, writing, tea, card or side tables, are ignored here as they have nothing to do with the present definition.

It is also obvious, in this book, that we are dealing only with the table made from wood, other materials, such as cane, iron, stone or marble do not concern us at present, although it may be noted, *en passant*, that in the seventeenth century some tables were made of silver.

That tables, in any form, are of great antiquity in England, is doubtful. If they were known in the thirteenth century, for example, it is remarkable that none have survived, as other thirteenth-century woodwork has, of a character much more frail

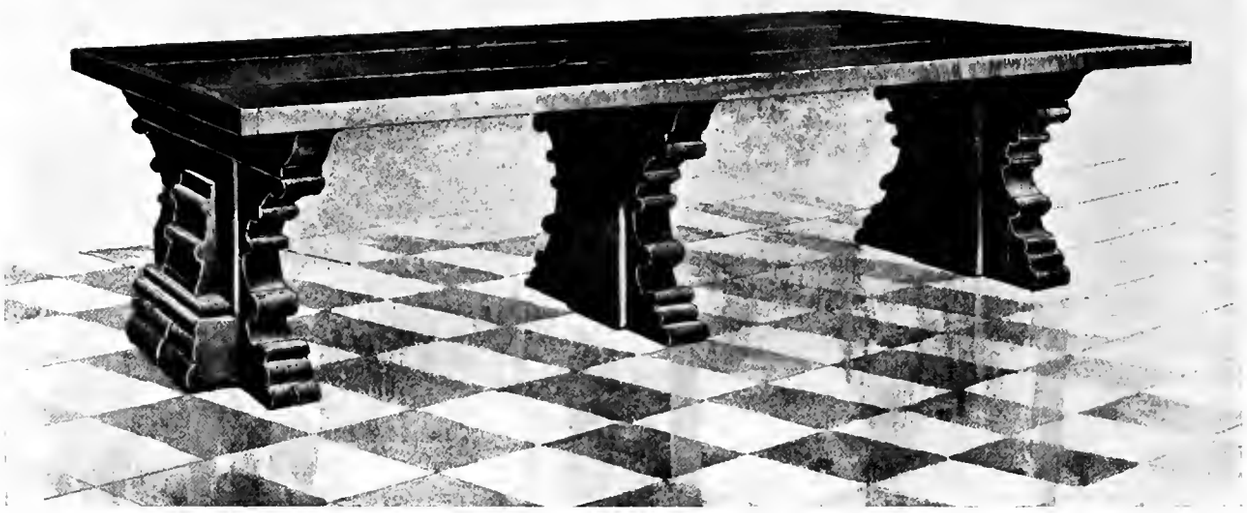


Fig. 125.

OAK TRESTLE-TABLE OF HEAVY TYPE.

This was the usual form of the early fifteenth century.

and perishable than an early oak table would have been. A somewhat hazardous speculation may be ventured here, that the large block, or cross-section of a tree-trunk sometimes to be found in butchers' shops, may be a survival of the primitive English table. In the ages when other furniture, such as chests and even pulpits, were hewn from the solid wood, a table made by the same method may have been similar to this butcher's block. Even had such pieces survived, their identity as tables might not be suspected. That the large coffers, such as the example in Westminster Abbey, which is upwards of thirteen feet in length, may also have acted as tables, when not in use

Fig. 126.

OAK TABLES AND FORMS, WITH ELM TOPS.

Late fifteenth century. Bablake Schools, Coventry.

Fig. 127.

OAK TRESTLE TABLE OF LIGHT TYPE.

7 ft. long by 2 ft. 3 ins. deep by 2 ft. 6 ins. high.

Early sixteenth century. Lord Cowdray.

Fig. 128.

OAK TABLE (ONE-HALF ONLY).

Originally 20 ft. long by 2 ft. 7 ins. deep by 2 ft. 10 ins. high. Top 4 ins. thick.

The Marquis of Townshend.

as chests, is possible, as the seats may have been low stools. We know that chairs were not used for this purpose.

In the development of table-types, we are compelled to begin with those of trestle form, such as Fig. 125, and to assume that this is the primitive English table. The supports to the heavy top are massive baulks of oak, buttressed on the fronts and backs and at each end, with separate shaped brackets, all cut from oak of large scantling. At Penshurst are two of these huge Gothic tables, similar to the one illustrated here, but of lighter construction, in proportion to their size, which is enormous. The top of one of

Fig. 129.

OAK TABLE AND FORM (WITH LATER DRAW-TOP).

Table 2 ft. 10½ ins. high, 5 ft. 2 ins. long by 1 ft. 8½ ins. deep. Form 1 ft. 11 ins. high, 5 ft. 5 ins. wide by 9½ ins. deep.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

these tables measures over twenty-seven feet in length by three in width. In spite of this great size, the top has only the one central support, as in the example shown here. These trestle tables are, originally, of late fourteenth-century date, but none of this period appear to have survived, unless we place the Penshurst tables as early as this. Elm was frequently used for these great tops. An example exists at Bishops Farm, Windsor, where the top is some nine feet in length by three in width, and nearly six inches in thickness, in the one piece, hewn from a mighty elm trunk. It is in fair preservation, in spite of the wood. Unfortunately, elm perishes if not kept actually immersed in water. A plank suspended lengthwise, and without touching the ground, will rot at its lower end, after a comparatively short space of time. In spite of this drawback, or because of this property of the timber not being known, elm was frequently used for the tops of early tables. The wood is not nearly so slow in growth as oak, and the tree is shallow rooted. A violent storm will blow down an elm where it will leave an oak untouched. Elm trees, being thus felled in this manner, would be used, in all probability, instead of oak, for the reason that they were ready to hand, and did not require the laborious cutting down which was necessary in the case of a full-grown oak.

The tables in the old refectory of the Bablake Schools at Coventry, Fig. 126, are also of this trestle type, and have their forms to match. They vary in length from the one in the foreground, to the short table shown at the end. The tops, which appear to be original, are of elm, in three boards, bolted together with long iron dowels bored

Fig. 130.

OAK SIDEBOARD TABLE (RESTORED).

6 ft. 5½ ins. long by 2 ft. 4 ins. high by 2 ft. 1 in. deep.

Early sixteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

right through from the one side of the top to the other. The two tables shown here differ from each other somewhat, in construction. The small one, at the end of the room, has a heavy top-framing, tenoned into the shaped cross-pieces into which the trestles are fixed. The long table has a massive central rail, running parallel to the length of the top on its centre line, and into this, at right angles, are tenoned broad clamps, which serve to keep the top from warping. In both tables the trestles are tied together by long rails, carried through them in rounded tusk tenons, secured at the outside by wedges. The entire construction is simple and logical, admirable for its purpose in every way. These tables, with their forms, are of early sixteenth-century type, but their actual date is uncertain. The chimney-piece in this room, removed from the house of Sir Orlando Bridgman, has already been illustrated in Vol. I, Fig. 300.

Fig. 131.

OAK SIDEBOARD TABLE.

4 ft. 7 ins. wide by 2 ft. 3 ins. deep by 2 ft. 5 ins. high.

c. 1550. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

It appears to be almost a fixed law, in the case of English furniture, that development is always in the direction of lighter construction. Thus, the table shown in Fig. 127, originally from Cowdray Priory, and now restored, as nearly as possible, to its former home, is late for its type, which is that of the fifteenth rather than of the sixteenth century. There are details, such as the thin top, the slender trestles, and the light stretcher-railings, which indicate a later date, beyond question. The lesson has been learned here, that massive baulks of oak are not necessarily permanent by reason of their size, as proper seasoning of bulky timbers is difficult, if not impossible. It is safer to use oak of lesser scantling, which has been thoroughly dried and matured.

Certain table patterns from the fifteenth century remained stabilised for many years after. In the absence of the original types, which have, long since, disappeared, these later copies are useful in indicating a bygone fashion. Thus, Fig. 128 is of early character, but the tapered legs, pierced through from all sides, with the suggestion of a keystone to the arch, cannot be referred to a date earlier than about 1550. This remarkable table, from Rainham Hall in Norfolk, is really the half of one twice its present length, originally on three central supports. Being cut into two portions, demanding a support at either end, one new leg had to be made. In the illustration here, both are

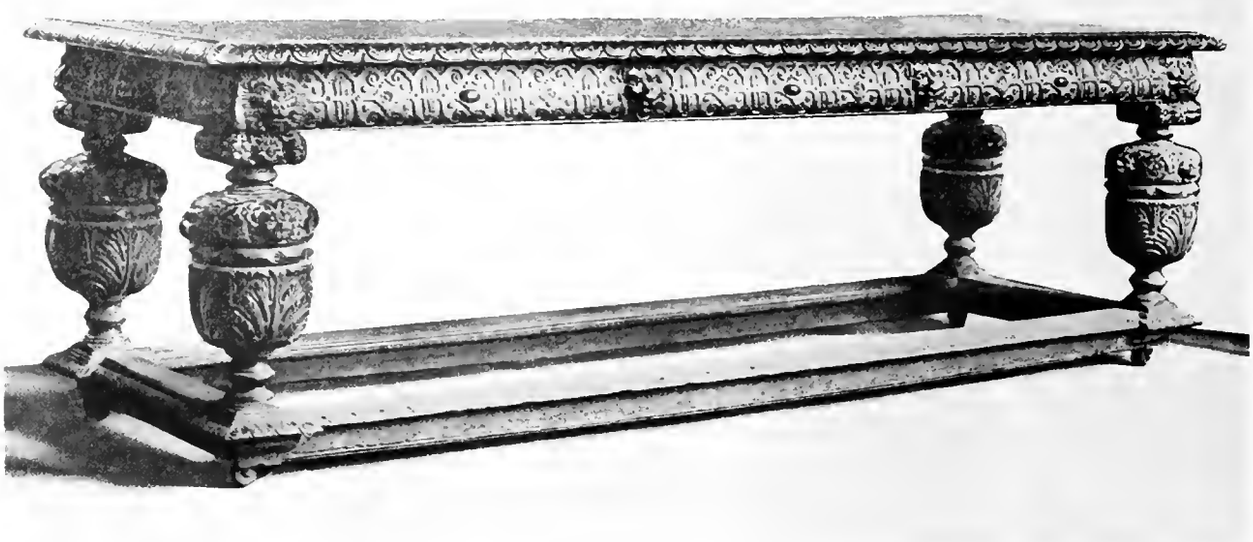


Fig. 132.

OAK TABLE WITH MODERN TOP AND RAIL CAPPINGS.

8 ft. 8 ins. extreme width (not over top) by 2 ft. 10 ins. deep by 2 ft. 9 ins. high over all.

Late sixteenth century. The Vicars' Hall, Exeter.

original. Before it was divided, the table had a length of 20 ft. with a width of 2 ft. 7 ins. The top is 4 ins. thick, clamped at the ends, but is lined up to this by a solid 3-inch framing. There is a suggestion of the earlier Gothic in the cross-bearers above the legs. The wood is English oak, quartered in the original fine manner. The former traditions, however, were usually well maintained throughout the whole of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, although the stringent regulations of the Trade Guilds were no longer enforced with the old-time severity. It is rare, at all periods, up to the close of the sixteenth century, in the history of English oak furniture, to find timber cut in planks without quartering. The durable qualities of quartered oak were too well understood for the practice to be discontinued.

Fig. 129 is also from the middle of the sixteenth century, and is important in possessing one of the original stools, but the draw-top is later in date. This method of extending the top is a seventeenth-century innovation, and the practice of inserting mitre-ended clamps in the solid wood is also not a sixteenth-century custom. This

Fig. 133.

OAK TABLE.

6 ft. 7½ ins. long by 3 ft. deep by 3 ft. 1 in. high.

Late sixteenth century. Pilton Church, N. Devon.

table and its stool is reputed to have come from Broadway, Ilminster, in Somerset, and might be accepted as the type of that locality, were it possible to ascribe counties of origin at this early date. It is safer, however, to reserve such speculations until the end of the sixteenth century is reached.

It has been remarked that long chests were probably used also as tables, and Figs. 130 and 131 show a type which is a combination of the two. Fig. 130 is earlier, and much finer in quality than Fig. 131. It dates from the first years of the sixteenth century, and shows the influence of the rich woodwork of the fifteenth. Unfortunately, this piece has been badly restored at its ends, by a workman unacquainted with the fact that the true mitre (as distinct from the mason's mitre which is worked on the

Fig. 134.

WALNUT TABLE.

4 ft. 7¾ ins. long by 2 ft. 10¾ ins. deep by 2 ft. 6¼ ins. high.

Late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Ruckinge Church, Kent.

solid after the framing is put together) was practically unknown at this date. Actually, very little remains of the original, other than the four pierced and carved panels with their framings and the front legs, although there is no reason to doubt that the piece was in much the same form as it is at present, when it was made. The panels show, on the first from the left, a crown, probably ducal, with the portcullis of Beaufort below, partially covered by the sacred monogram (I.H.S.) which suggests that the piece was made for ecclesiastical uses. Next in order is the three lilies of France on a shield. There is some slight significance in the use of three lilies only, as they were adopted as one of the quarterings of the royal arms during the latter part of the reign of Henry IV, and continued until James VI of Scotland ascended the English throne in 1603,—unfortunately a margin of time far too great to be of service to us here. The central panel is not original, and may have been, formerly, the most elaborate of the five. The fourth

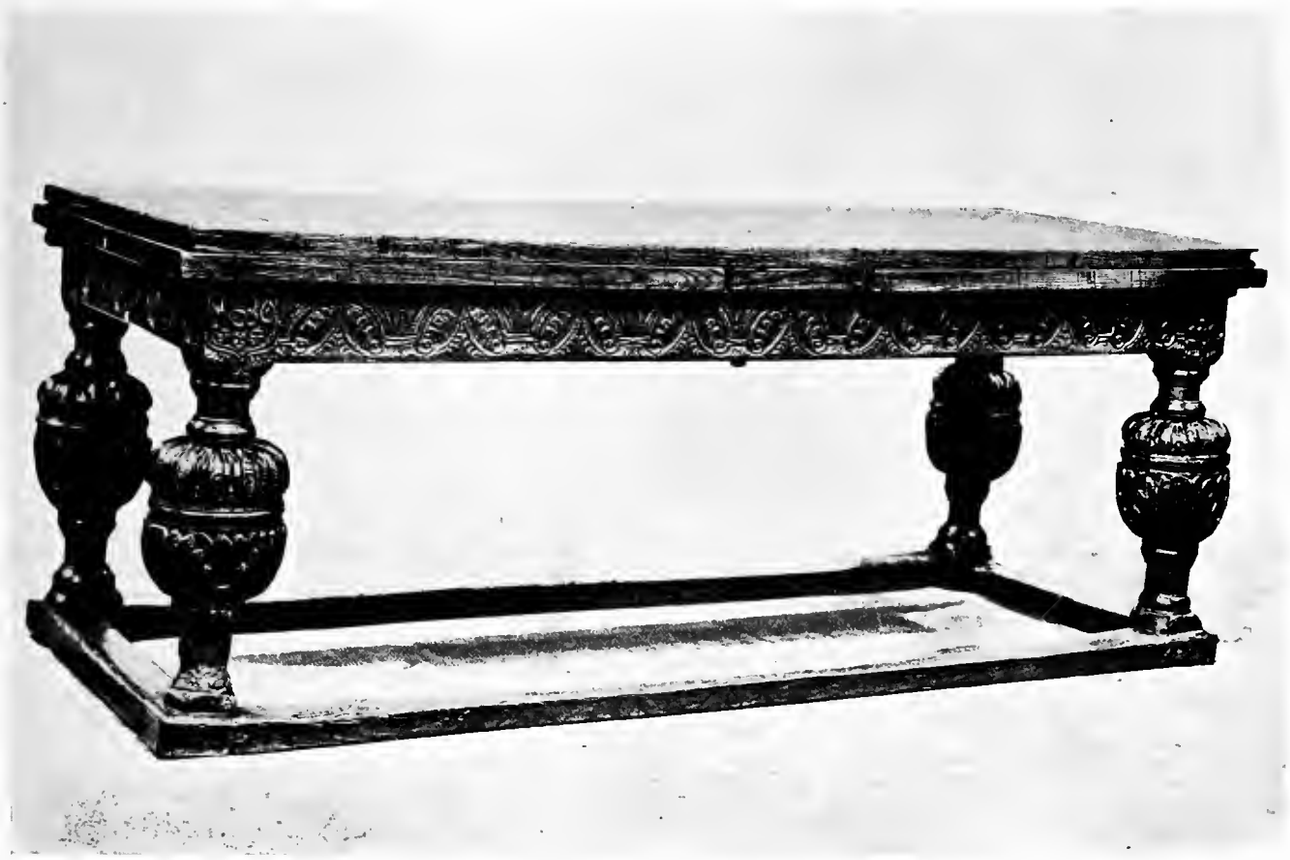


Fig. 135.

DRAW-TABLE OF ELM AND ASH.

Sizes (closed) 7 ft. long by 2 ft. 9½ ins. deep by 2 ft. 9 ins. high.

Dated 1630. Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

has the Tudor rose pierced and carved, and the fifth suggests that this table cannot be earlier than the first years of the sixteenth century. It is of unusually high quality, both in design and cutting, which is also some indication that it is early in the century.

Fig. 131 is the secular version of the same form of table, of rougher make and later date. The oak front is cut from the log without quartering, a sure indication of the decline in power of the early Guilds,—whose officials inspected all timber before use, up to the first years of the sixteenth century,—and a date subsequent to the dissolution of the Monasteries. The central door here is of doubtful authenticity ; it has the appearance of a later endeavour to make use of the space behind the front as a cupboard. The usual form was to hinge the tops of tables of this kind with large pins pierced through massive end-clamps or battens under the top into the sides. On these pins the top opened in the manner of the thirteenth-century chests.

With the introduction of the table formed by framings tenoned into the upper squares of turned legs and with bracing stretchers below, we are on firmer ground. Turning is a much older art in the history of English woodworking than its appearance in tables would suggest. Primitive methods probably caused it to be abandoned in favour of the square-section, either plain, or with carving. It is rare to find tables with

Fig. 136.
OAK TABLE.
5 ft. long by 2 ft. 6 ins. high.
Date about 1630–40. Earl Stonham Church, Suffolk.

turned legs of date prior to the last quarter of the sixteenth century; in fact, if they were made, none seem to have survived.

Turned table-legs admit of a somewhat definite classification, due allowance being made for inevitable overlapping of types. Thus, the bulbous-leg begins about 1575, or possibly somewhat later, and persists, in modified form, until about 1645–50. Fig. 132 is the early type, and Fig. 141 the last phase of this manner. The leg in the form of a column, generally with astragal collars, commences somewhat later, about 1590, and lasts until the end of the seventeenth century, if we may include tables inlaid with marqueterie in this category. The vase-turned leg comes into vogue just prior to the Commonwealth and carries us into the early years of the eighteenth century, running parallel, for a part of this period, with the cabriole form. The twist or spiral turning is much more confined in period than the other patterns just referred to. It is doubtful if it was used for the legs of tables prior to the Restoration, and it is rare to find it on pieces of the eighteenth century, with the exception of the square cabinets on spiral-turned stands which were made until the close of the reign of William III, if not the opening years of Anne.

There is still one type of turning, a representation of a number of bobbins strung together, which belongs to the middle of the seventeenth century—from about 1640 to 1665—and is rarely found on pieces other than chairs or tables of oak or fruit-wood,

Fig. 137.

OAK DRAW-TABLE.

Length (closed), 10 ft. 8 ins.; height, 2 ft. 8 ins.; depth, 3 ft. 1 in.

Date about 1670. Lord Cranworth.

—apple, pear, cherry, and sometimes yew. The leg turned in the form of an inverted cup with a downward tapering shaft below, on the other hand, is nearly always found on furniture of walnut ; rarely of oak. We are, therefore, not concerned with this pattern at present. The twisted leg is both an oak and a walnut type, being found almost as frequently in the former wood as in the latter.

We have, therefore, five distinct patterns of leg-turning during the period from about 1575 to 1689. These are, with their dates, as follows :—

The Bulb	1575–1650
The Column	1590–1700
The Bobbin	1640–1665
The Spiral or Twist	1660–1703
The Vase	1645–1710

To this may be added the inverted-cup turning, for the sake of completing the series,

Fig. 138.

OAK TABLE.

5 ft. 5 ins. long by 2 ft. 1½ ins. deep by 2 ft. 8 ins. high.

Date about 1630. Formerly in Sutton Courtenay Church.

with a period of from 1689 to 1705, running parallel with the shaped or cabriole leg, in its various forms, for about the last seven of these years.

It is proposed to follow the order of type-development rather than that of chronological progression, in this as in other chapters, as being more illuminating, although it may involve periodical returns to a starting-point. The advantages of being able to compare the same form at different stages in its development, however, far outweigh any drawbacks such as the one just referred to.

Following the order outlined above, in this progression of oak tables with turned legs, we may commence with the bulb, that turning feature which enjoyed such favour, and for so long. It is used for the legs of chairs as well as those of tables (although in an attenuated form, as one would expect in the case of a chair), and for the posts of important pieces. It is a Stuart rather than a Tudor form, although it undoubtedly originated in Tudor times. Bulbous legs of the sixteenth century are rare, however, and they may be characterised by possessing a richness of carving which is unusual in the early years of the next century. One of the finest examples of a Tudor table with bulb legs is the one in the Vicars' Hall, Exeter, illustrated here in Fig. 132. The history

Fig. 139.

OAK TABLE.

11 ft. 1½ ins. long by 2 ft. 8 ins. deep by 2 ft. 8½ ins. high; 4 ins. deep framing; 4½ ins. legs.

Mid-seventeenth century. The Earl of Essex.

of the Hall of the Vicars' Choral has already been given in pages 271, 277, 278 and 279 of the preceding volume. At what period, and under which Bishop this table came into the Vicars' Hall is not clear, but that it has not been highly esteemed is evident. The top, with its Victorian carved thumb-moulding, and the cappings to the stretcher railings, of the same period, are ignorant additions. The original top was, probably, one of square-edged boards. There are no signs of the runners, or "lopers" which would indicate a draw-top table. The ogival frieze and the massive legs are carved in the rich manner of the later period of Elizabeth, with a strong suggestion of Devonshire work at this date. The stretcher-rails are much worn, which may have suggested the addition of the moulded capping rails, but the other parts are in a fine state of preservation.

The moulding of the under-framing of these bulb-leg tables appears to be typical both of Devonshire and the last years of the sixteenth century. Fig. 133, the present altar table in Pilton Church, N. Devon, has a carved cushion frieze. The stretcher railing has disappeared, and the table has been raised by the additions of turned vases under the original legs. The carving is not so rich as on the Vicars' Hall example, nor is the entire design as fine. This is a typical draw-table of a very early date for this form of extending top.

Fig. 140.
OAK TABLE.

4 ft. 6 ins. long by 2 ft. 7 ins. high.
Date about 1640–50. Stonham Aspal Church, Suffolk.

It is curious to note how a comparison of many of these tables, now in use in Churches, leads to the supposition that, although made for secular use in practically every instance, they have nearly all remained in their own county of origin. Thus the example from Ruckinge Church, Fig. 134, is typical not only of Kent, but of the Romney Marsh district. Kent is a puzzling county to the student of English furniture, especially in the case of early oak. We find the London fashions perpetuated in the towns and villages in the line from London, through Eltham, possibly Sidcup, certainly Dartford and so on to Gravesend and Rochester. There is another style evident which may have had its fountain-head at Canterbury or Ashford,—probably the former. The Ruckinge table is of this type. Yet a third manner, markedly influenced from French sources, is to be met with in the neighbourhood of Hythe, extending from thence over the Sussex border into Rye, Pevensey and Hastings.

Fig. 141.
OAK TABLE.
3 ft. 6 ins. long by 2 ft. deep by 2 ft. 4 ins. high.
Date about 1640–50. H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

This Ruckinge altar table has been painted or grained—the work is so old that it is difficult to distinguish between the two—and the wood appears to be walnut ; it is certainly not oak. Originally a draw-table, the signs of three runners, or " lopers," can be seen at each end, the slots being visible, externally, at the end not seen in the illustration, but on the other they have been covered by the facing of the frieze. This facing is now so worm-eaten that it has the hollow sound, when tapped with the point of the finger, of embossed paper, yet, although much altered, it is original. The top is a later addition, and the lower squares of the legs, with the stretcher-railing, are largely restored, if not entirely replaced by subsequent work.

The bulb-turning of the seventeenth century is generally more loosely designed than is the case with the work of the sixteenth. A comparison between the next example, Fig. 135, and the Vicars' Hall table will show this distinction more clearly than it can be expressed in words. Both examples are equally fine of their kind, but there is a difference not only of district but also of date. One is unmistakably Tudor, the other

Fig. 142.

OAK TABLE.

6 ft. 6½ ins. long by 2 ft. 6½ ins. deep by 2 ft. 4½ ins. high.

Date about 1650–60. J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

Fig. 143.
OAK TABLE.
15 ft. 3 ins. long by 2 ft. 7 ins. high.
Date about 1640–50. Albert Cubitt, Esq.

equally as unquestionably early Stuart. The use of elm and ash, in combination, at this date suggests Cumberland or Westmorland, as it is rare, in the south, to find ash of the size in which it is used here, and it is very exceptional to find it at all in tables from East Anglia, until almost the close of the seventeenth century. The notching of the stretcher-framing over the squares of the legs is later work, evidently a restoration at a subsequent period. Additional evidence for this northern origin can be found

Fig. 144.
OAK TABLE.
9 ft. 2 ins. long by 2 ft. 9 ins. deep by 2 ft. 7 ins. high.
Date about 1640–50. Victoria and Albert Museum.

in the pattern of the carving of the framing. The date, 1630, is carved on the upper square of the left-hand leg in the illustration.

The ordinances forbidding the use of elaborate altars in churches, which were reiterated on several occasions during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, led to the use of secular tables as altars. It will be found, in nearly every church throughout England, that where simple altar tables have been specifically made as such, they are nearly all of modern construction. In the larger number of instances the secular tables of the time are used, generally altered or modified,—often raised in height,—with loss to their original integrity. These alterations or additions, in nearly all cases, however, have been made so frankly, with no attempt at deception, that there is no difficulty in differentiating the original from the subsequent work. Thus the oak table in Earl Stonham Church is, obviously, a larger one cut down, with extension brackets added and the stretcher-railing of late work. It will be wiser, in nearly every example

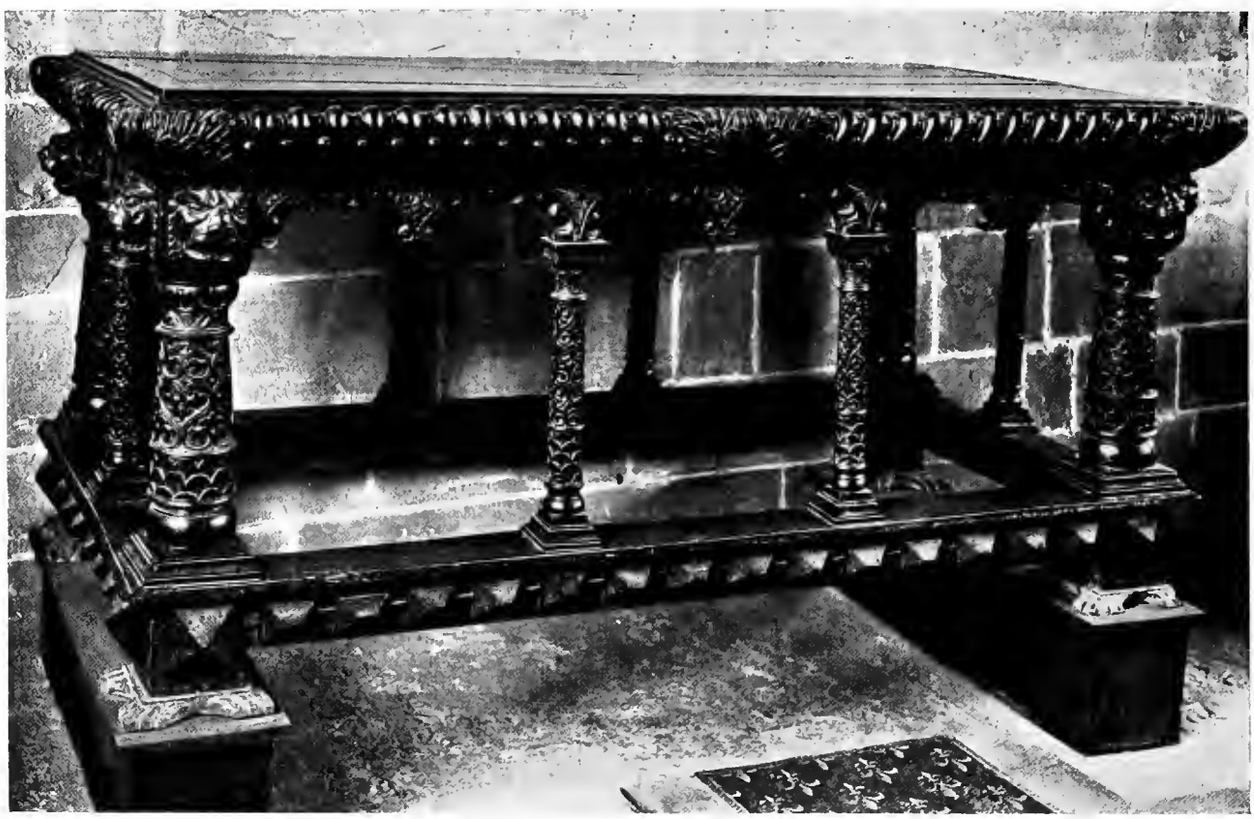


Fig. 145.

OAK TABLE.

8 ft. long by 2 ft. 5 ins. deep by 3 ft. high.

Date about 1590.

Cathedral Church of St. Michael's, Coventry.

of these church tables, to consider them as specimens of the bulbous-leg turning and decoration of their period, and to ignore the remainder of the table entirely. In this example from Earl Stonham the bulb-legs, with the graceful vase form of the lower section, are in the finest East Anglian manner of the first half of the seventeenth century.

This tapered bulb is one of the few details in leg-turning which appear to have been confined, exclusively, to Norfolk and Suffolk. The Earl Stonham table is an early example of the form, the legs here being carved, whereas, towards the end of the seventeenth century, carving was nearly always omitted, decorative use being made of rings either of simple bead or astragal section. At this date, also, the bold hollow dividing the leg into two unequal portions is generally dispensed with. This later type, in its most elaborate form, strongly suggestive of Dutch influences, has already been shown

Fig. 146.

OAK DRAW-TABLE.

7 ft. 1 in. long by 2 ft. 9¾ ins. wide by 2 ft. 5¾ ins. high.

Date about 1605–10. St. Mary's Hall, Coventry.

in the open buffet, Fig. 111 of the preceding chapter. The fine draw-table from Grundisburgh, Fig. 137, is the typical East Anglian version of this tapered vase leg, which may, possibly, have been inspired by the Chinese pottery forms which had begun to find their way into England at this date, from the Dutch merchants trading in the East. The frieze of this table is inlaid with a herring-bone pattern of a lighter wood, below which is a carved band of thumb-section. The turned legs are of admirably restrained form, with simple Ionic caps above. The table has the dignity which is characteristic of East Anglian work of the later years of the seventeenth century.

Sutton Courtenay Church possessed a complete unaltered table, Fig. 138, with the exception of some replacement of the stretcher-framing. There is a curious admixture of vigour and crudeness in the fashioning of the octagonal-sectioned legs which may be taken as indicative of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire tables of this period. This oak table has the fine dull metallic sheen which original early oak possesses when it has not been varnished, either originally or subsequently. It has also the peculiar high lights (or rather half-lights) on the exposed edges and angles, which the forger of antique

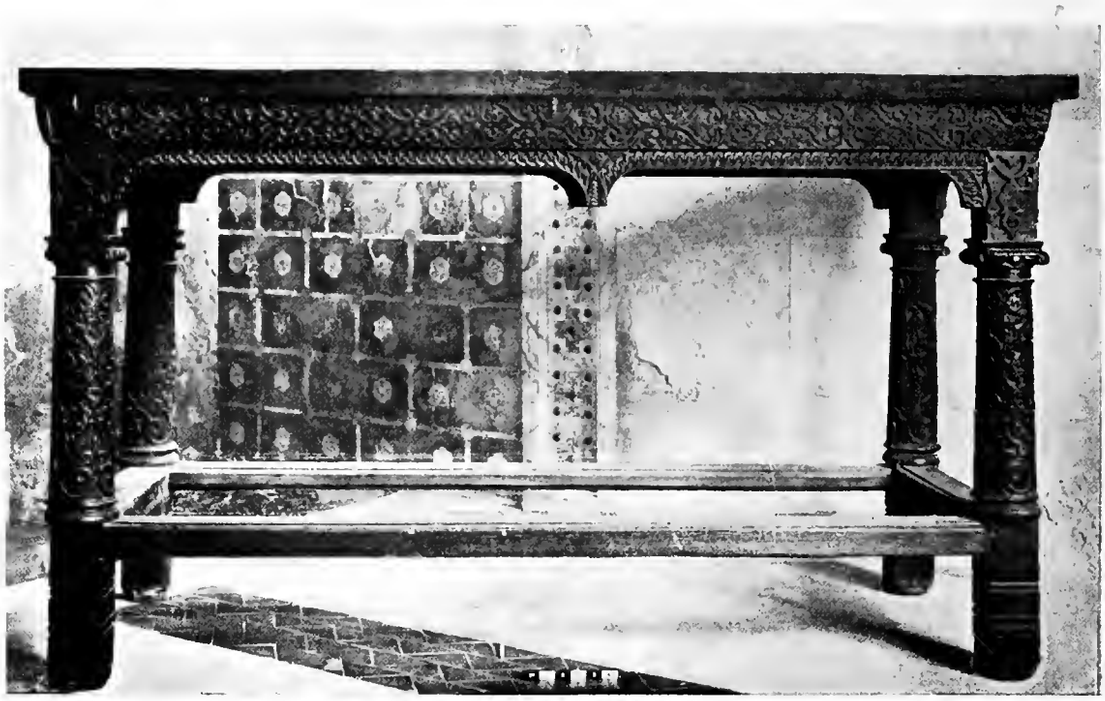


Fig. 147.

OAK TABLE.

5 ft. 6 ins. long by 2 ft. 3 ins. deep by 3 ft. 3 ins. high.

Date about 1610–20. St. Michael's Church, St. Albans.

furniture always fails to reproduce, in nearly every instance exaggerating this effect in a manner which an expert eye can detect at a glance.

It is towards the middle of the seventeenth century, when the desire for ornament was more subdued, that these bulb-leg tables became refined. In obedience to the law before mentioned, construction and details became lighter, with the bulb attenuated, but more graceful in outline. There is no longer the great mass of timber dwindling down to a mere spindle at the top and bottom, as in the table in the Vicars' Hall at Exeter, for example. The long table from Cassiobury Park, Fig. 139, shows this refined mid-seventeenth-century manner very well. There is the thin top of this period, in long narrow boards with small end clamps, the fluted frieze with shallow brackets at the junction of the framings with the squares of the legs, and the plain stretcher-railing

Fig. 148.

OAK TABLE.

5 ft. 9 ins. long by 2 ft. 1 in. deep by 2 ft. 10 ins. high.

Date about 1620. Christchurch Priory.

flush with the fronts of the lower squares, all details of the 1640–50 period and of the Home Counties.

Stonham Aspal altar table, Fig. 140, is of about the same date, but is the East Anglian version of the manner of the Cassiobury table. The bulbs are somewhat attenuated, as compared with those of earlier date, and the legs have the Ionic capitals as at Earl Stonham and Grundisburgh, but the ornament is everywhere more restrained. This table, in common with nearly all others in churches, has suffered from repairs and additions.

It is impossible to account for the close similarity between many of these oak tables of the middle seventeenth century other than in the hypothesis that they originate from nearly the same district. Even if the Home County origin of the table from Cassiobury were disputed, it must be admitted that Fig. 141 is from the same locality, whatever that may be. Here we have the same bulb, turned from the square-thickness without the paring down, above and below, which we find in the tables of the East, West and Southern Counties of England. There is the same flat bracketting of the frieze rails, at their junctions with the leg-squares, in both cases. The small table shown here has its stools to correspond, which are made so that they will fit, laterally, between the table legs. There is the prevalence of a long-existing fashion evident in its design and proportions. This is a type which has evolved, through many

Fig. 149.

OAK TABLE.

19 ft. 8 ins. long by 2 ft. 10½ ins. deep by 2 ft. 9 ins. high.
Date about 1620. The Earl of Chesterfield.

intermediate stages. The table from Holywells, Fig. 142, is more ornate, and somewhat later in date, but not in development. Here the turning is cruder, as if it were fashioned by hand, and the general appearance is somewhat marred by the capping to the stretcher-rails. This table exhibits strong Dutch influence, and may be actually of foreign make.

The attenuated bulb develops by a gradual cutting away of its lower extremity, until it assumes, first, the appearance of an inverted vase, and from this to the cup-and-shaft turning of the Orange period is only a step further in development. This evolution can be traced, in its inception, in the long table, Fig. 143, and in the next example, Fig. 144, the beginning of the cup-turned leg can be seen quite clearly. The first has the frieze-rail carried over the square of the central leg,—generally a Yorkshire or Lancashire device, but sometimes found also in East Anglia,—whereas in the latter this rail is tenoned into the squares, in the centre as well as the ends. It has the bracket-finish of Figs. 139 and 141, but this bracket is not so flat, and is distinct from the frieze rail,

Fig. 150.

OAK SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE.

The playing end.

23 ft. 7 ins. long by 3 ft. 1½ ins. wide by 3 ft. 1½ ins. high.

Date about 1620. Astley Hall, Chorley, Lancs.

details indicative of Norfolk or Lincolnshire rather than the counties further south. That this table came from Kiddal Hall, in Yorkshire, does not necessarily imply that it had its origin in that county.

To consider the column form of table-leg turning it is necessary to retrace our steps and to commence with the sixteenth century again.

Fig. 145 is a remarkable table in the Drapers' Chapel of St. Michael's Church, Coventry, which might, at first glance, be referred to a foreign source. A close examination of the details, especially of the gadrooning of the top framing and its arcading under, will show that this table must be classed with many of the elaborate four-post bedsteads of the time, the English origin of which is unquestionable. There is also strong presumptive evidence that this table is of Warwickshire make, as there are two other examples, obviously from the same hand, but in varying stages of addition, restoration or dilapidation, one on the altar, the other in Trinity Church, all of different sizes, and supported on stages of later date to serve as altar tables. The three are identical in essential details. That they were all three imported is doubtful; it is more

Fig. 151.

THE OAK SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, FIG. 150.

The box end.

Fig. 152.

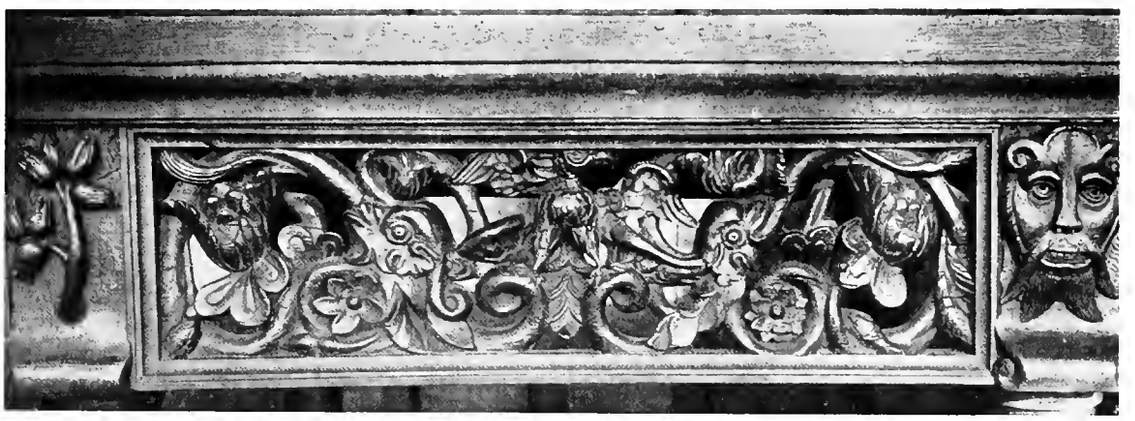


Fig. 153.

Fig. 154.

SECTIONS OF FRIEZE OF OAK SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, FIGS. 150 AND 151.

Fig. 155.

Fig. 156.

Fig. 157.

SECTIONS OF FRIEZE OF OAK SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, FIGS. 150 AND 151.

Fig. 158.

Fig. 159.

Fig. 160.

SECTIONS OF FRIEZE OF OAK SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, FIGS. 150 AND 151.

Fig. 161.

THE TOP OF THE SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, FIG. 150, ILLUSTRATED HERE IN TWO SECTIONS.

Showing the parqueterie construction, and box at the end.

probable to suppose that a renowned maker existed in Coventry itself, who was commissioned to make these tables. They are rich, even barbaric, in character, and there is little, if any, of the Gothic influence in their design. They are, in fact, tables of the secular type, and the raising on extra supports must imply that they were not specifically made for Church use.

The top, in this example, is of oak, in five sections, dropped into a rebate in the framing. This has the appearance of a later addition. Originally, the top may have been of marble, onyx or alabaster, which has broken and disappeared. Alabaster was a favourite material for many of the sculptured tombs at this period. It is possible that an important piece, such as this table must have been, was made with a top of this material, especially as with one of wood it would have not been necessary to have sunk the top in a rebate at all.

The importance of this example cannot be over-estimated. It is so usual to refer oak tables of unquestionably seventeenth-century date, to the reign of Elizabeth, that to have a specimen which cannot be later than about 1590, and the English origin of which is almost beyond dispute, is to have a guide in estimating the age of examples to be illustrated at a later stage.

Fig. 162.
OAK TABLE.
Date about 1620. A. Cubitt, Esq.

Towards the closing years of the sixteenth century and during the early part of the reign of James I, both tables and chairs were usually much more richly ornamented than at a later date. It is safe in almost every instance to state that elaborately carved tables

are of early period, although after the Restoration there was a brief revival of this rich oak furniture, until walnut became the favourite wood instead of the national oak. The magnificent draw-table from St. Mary's Hall at Coventry, Fig. 146, may be taken as the height of this exuberant early Stuart fashion of the carved columnar leg on a square base. It has also the great advantage of being in its original state throughout, with nothing missing, beyond the wearing of the bases which has brought the stretcher-

Fig. 163.

OAK BOX TABLE.

First half of the seventeenth century. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

railing to the floor, and with nothing added beyond an outer lining to the column-bases. It appears to have once been the property of the Fairfax-Lucy family of Charlcote, but how it came into the Mayor's Parlour of St. Mary's Hall is not clear. Other furniture from this old Guildhall will be illustrated in a succeeding chapter tracing the development of oak chairs, when further details of the Hall itself will be given.

The table is of English oak throughout, with tops of six boards, tongue-jointed and mitre-clamped together. The oak is quartered, pit-sawn and roughly planed. The

Fig. 164.
OAK CUPBOARD TABLE.
Date about 1630–40. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

construction is worthy of note, as it is so seldom that an early seventeenth-century table is to be found in this complete state. The draw-tops extend quite easily, in spite of the age of the table. Tusk tenons are fixed, in slotted dovetails, to the under sides of the extension slides or "lopers" to prevent these tops being entirely withdrawn. The frieze, in the form of a cushion-moulding, is deeply carved in strap-wood patterns, and is carried, in the solid rail, over the squares of the legs. Below is a square-moulded abacus, and the leg is in true columnar form, with taper and entasis, finishing in an Ionic base. The bases are beaded on the edge, but these beads are on facing pieces which have been added at a later date, presumably as a repair. The fluting and strapping of the legs is very fine in execution and unusual in detail.

Rare as this St. Mary's Hall table is, as much on account of its design as of its well-preserved state, the column-leg itself appears to have enjoyed considerable popularity in the early Stuart years. Fig. 147 is an ornate example from St. Michael's Church at St. Albans, with a later top and stretcher, and with the lower squares of the legs mutilated and added to. The carving is small in scale and low in relief, but is choice in quality. It is to be suspected that this table comes from a locality considerably to the south-west of Hertfordshire. Fig. 148 is a coarser edition of this column-leg form, but it is doubtful if any parts, other than the four legs, are original.

Fig. 165.

OAK FOLDING-TOP TABLE.

Date about 1650. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 149, from Holme Lacy, but not original either to the house or its district, is one of the large guardroom tables of the first quarter of the seventeenth century, of great size, possessing six legs, to which the framings are tenoned, and two on the central line of the

top, secured above and below by cross-rails from the framing and the stretcher. The turning of the legs is typical of East Riding work of this period. These large tables were beginning to become rare after about 1610, and carving began to be either dispensed with altogether, or used with great reticence.

In a general way, tables of large size are usually of sixteenth-century date. With James I, the Great Hall went out of fashion, and in the Long Gallery, tables were usually constructed according to the width of the gallery rather than its length. Examples,

Fig. 166.

OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOPS.

Top, 2 ft. 7 ins. by 2 ft. 2 ins. 2 ft. 0½ in. high.

Date about 1620–40. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

such as the remarkable shuffleboard table at Astley Hall, here shown in Figs. 150 to 161, do not disprove this, as the table was made of great length for a specific purpose, i.e. a game, and all other considerations would be subservient to this. With long refectory tables, the great length presupposes the Great Hall, which was declining in importance, even in the later days of Elizabeth. In instances where these long tables were intended for the guardroom, an even earlier date must be assigned, as fortified houses, necessitating a guardroom close to the drawbridge, were rarely built after the first years of the

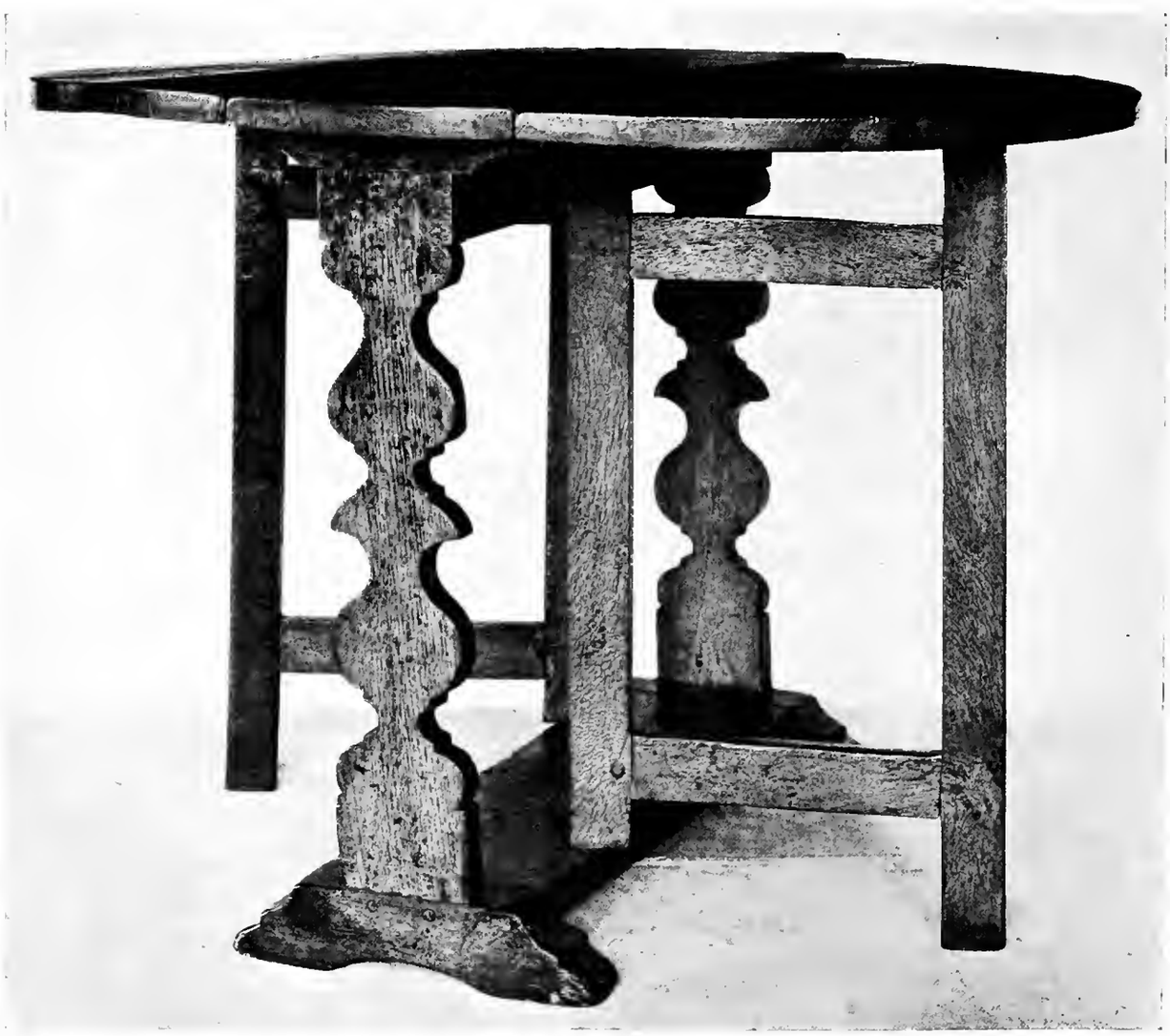


Fig. 167.

OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOP.

Early seventeenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

sixteenth century, although Fig. 149 is certainly a guardroom table, and of seventeenth-century date.

This shuffleboard table from Astley Hall, Chorley, Lancashire, could be described at considerable length were not the illustrations given here almost self-explanatory. The game of shuffle-, or shovel-board, is one of great antiquity in England, and persists, in remote country districts, to this day, under another name. It is rare, however, to find tables especially constructed for the game, such as this Astley Hall example. Very few are known to exist. The top of the table was generally marked out in squares, with varying numbers, and the player, standing at the end, placed a wooden disc, about three inches, or less, in diameter, at the extreme edge, with a portion hanging over. With a smart blow of the open palm, the disc was impelled up to the table, if possible into the square division bearing the highest number. A disc, too vigorously struck, would travel the entire length, and would fall into the box at the end, shown in the illustration. At a later date the disc was placed on the table and struck with a "mast" or implement something like a modern billiard cue, with a small cross-piece at its end. The earliest game of billiards (of which shuffleboard is probably the direct progenitor), was played with a mast instead of a cue, but in those days the use of chalk to prevent slipping of

Fig. 168.
APPLE WOOD TABLE.
Top, 2 ft. 7 ins. by 1 ft. 9 ins. 2 ft. 2 ins. high.
Date about 1650.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 169.
YEW TREE TABLE.
Top, 2 ft. 4 ins. by 1 ft. 7 ins. 2 ft. 4 ins. high.
Date about 1660.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

the cue-top on its contact with the ball, was unknown. The top of this table is constructed of a light framing or lipping, with an elaborate parqueterie, or herring-boning of thin oak pieces, the idea being to ensure a flat and level top. There are no squares or other divisions, the winner being he whose disc was the nearest to the verge of the box at the end. Two of the brass discs used, which appear to be original, still exist with the table, in size and form very similar to a flat brass four-ounce weight.

Both illustrations show only one side of the table, with its pierced panels shown in larger detail in Figs. 152 to 160, arranged in their correct progression. The other side has the double border which can be seen in the end view, Fig. 151, carried along its length. There must have been always an important as well as an unimportant side to this table. There is no question that it is in the gallery for which it was made, as it cannot be taken to pieces without breaking it apart, nor can it be moved out of the house where it is, without demolishing one of the walls. It was made for this gallery, put together in its position, and here it has remained ever since. The presence of the lion and unicorn in the section shown in Fig. 156 shows that it is a Stuart, not a Tudor table. The carving is quaint with devices and grotesques, many of which probably possess a real significance, and a personal application to the original owner for whom the table was made.

Fig. 170.
OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOPS.
Top, 2 ft. 7⅓ ins. by 2 ft. 6 ins. 2 ft. 4½ ins. high.
Date about 1645.
W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

The date of this table,—that is the actual period at which it was made, as distinct from the inception of the fashion which it exhibits in the turning of the legs and the carving of the frieze,—is somewhat obscure, and does not really concern us here, as dates stated in these pages are those of the birth of styles or the introduction of new details, not of the manufacture of the pieces themselves. Mr. Christopher Hussey, in "*Country Life*" (February 25th, 1922), while admitting that from the point of

style alone an earlier date might be assigned to this great table, places it as contemporary with the re-facing of the Hall in 1665, and the construction of the Gallery in which it is at present. The possibility of advantage being taken of the work done at the time to house a pre-existing table in a Gallery long enough to contain it, is ignored, not altogether with reason. If made for the gallery, instead of the reverse process, it is curious that such details as the lion, unicorn, crown and thistle,—details which had a real and topical significance during the reign of James I,—should have been perpetuated some fifty years later, when the union of England and Scotland must have been forgotten as an event in English history. In any case, the type of leg-turning is that of the first quarter of the seventeenth century, which is the date given here.

Fig. 162 is one of the small side or serving tables which were made in numbers during the first half of the seventeenth century. The top is in the form of half an octagon. The legs are in the column form of the period, turned with astragal rings in pairs. The squares above are ornamented with the early Jacobean type of split baluster. The table has a drawer, the front of which is decorated with flat fret or strap-work, carved from the solid. It was originally fitted with a second top, hinged to the first and supported on a pivoted framed "gate" behind.

Fig. 163 is later, and of more usual type. Here the legs are of the inverted vase-baluster form, which develops in several ways towards the close of the Restoration period. This is a true side table of the Cromwell period, and may be taken as a good example of the simple furniture which was in favour during Puritan times in England. Fig. 164 has the extending leg at the back and a double hinged top, so that it could be used, on occasion, as a centre table. It is

Fig. 171.
OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOPS.
Top, 3 ft. 9 ins. by 3 ft. 3 ins. 2 ft. 3 ins. high.
Date about 1660–70. H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

fitted with a central door, behind which is a cupboard, probably intended to contain silver or pewter. Fig. 165 is smaller, and has the true vase-baluster leg of the later period of James II. This is, however, still a Cromwellian piece. It has the folding hinged top supported on the pull-out back leg in the manner of this date.

These tables with double tops, pave the way, in the progression of table-types, for the gate-leg, where the top consists of a central part with hinged flaps on either side, each supported on a pull-out leg or gate. It must not be assumed, however, that these Cromwellian double-top tables are the progenitors of the gate-leg. Fig. 166, although it may possess an early appearance by reason of its crudity, both in design and make, is still prior to the Commonwealth and might be referred to a date as early as the reign of James I. It would be safer, however, to ascribe it to the years between 1620 and 1640. It is, probably, of Welsh origin, which would account for the solid trestle-form of the supports at either end. The development from this type is shown in Fig. 167, where some attempt at relief from this primitive trestle form has been attempted. The

Fig. 172.
OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOPS.
Top, 5 ft. 9 ins. by 5 ft. 1 in. 2 ft. 4 ins. high.
Date about 1660. Messrs. Williamson and Sons.

method of pivoting the gates on either side is early, indicating a date not later than about 1640. This table is, probably, of Shropshire origin.

It is to the period of the Commonwealth that we owe the so-called bobbin-turning before referred to. Small tables, often of oak, but sometimes of apple, pear, cherry or almond, were made in numbers for the Puritan houses. They are generally of simple type, but extremely effective, correct in proportions, and showing considerable ingenuity in the use of the lathe. Three examples are given in Figs. 168 to 170, of which the last is probably somewhat the earlier in date.

The gate-leg table reaches its full style and importance after the Restoration, and although at this period, walnut was superseding oak, for such pieces of furniture as were made to stand away from a wall,—chairs and the like,—these tables are more often found in oak than in walnut, especially when of large size. Fig. 171 is one of the smaller

Fig. 173.
WALNUT TABLE WITH HINGED TOP.
Date about 1670–80.

Fig. 174.

OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOPS AND DOUBLE GATE.

Date about 1670.

Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 175.

OAK CORNER TABLE WITH HINGED TOP.

Date about 1650.

Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 176.

OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOP.

Top, 2 ft. 5. ins. by 2 ft. 2 ins. Height, 2 ft. 5 ins.

Date about 1680.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 177.

OAK TABLE.

Top, 2 ft. 6 ins. by 1 ft. 5 ins. Height, 2 ft. 6 ins.

Date about 1680-90.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

kinds, intended rather as an occasional than as a dining-table. Fig. 172 is larger and more important, with spiral legs, finely lathe-twisted. It will be apprehended that the size of a table of this kind is limited, as, given a dimension of the central portion, the height of the top from the floor governs the size of the flaps. It is rare to find one of these Restoration gate-leg tables with a top larger than six feet by five, and even of these dimensions they are rare and valuable.

Fig. 178.
OAK TABLE WITH HINGED TOP.
Top, 4 ft. 7 ins. by 3 ft. 4½ ins.
Date about 1690.

Another, and a later form of the hinged top table, which could be used for dining when extended, and when not required for such use, could be folded and placed against a wall, is shown in Fig. 173. Here the section of the stretcher-rails and the bun fret below the twisted legs indicate a date towards the end of the reign of Charles II. This table is made from English walnut, another evidence of a late period.

The form of the graceful vase-baluster begins towards the middle of the seventeenth century, and carries us into the early years of the eighteenth. Its development, and the probable reasons which dictated its evolution, will be considered later. In Fig. 174 this type just begins to assert itself. In the small table, Fig. 175, it is shown in its advanced form, but there is a tendency to elaboration in the turning members of the lower part of the shaft, which is not found in the later work. Figs. 176 and 177 show the growing tendency towards simplicity, in the turning of these vase-balusters, which manifests itself as the century advances. Fig. 178 is an important table, which may date from the short reign of James II, but is probably even later. The legs are finely proportioned and turned with great skill and taste. The general construction is early in type, but there is a maturity in the composition of the whole design which suggests a late date.

Fig. 179.
PORTION OF OAK ALTAR RAILING.
Date about 1690–5. New Romney Church, Kent.

As the seventeenth century closes, there are evidences of increasing skill in the use of the turning lathe, not so much a mere mechanical perfection in the use of the chisel and gouge, as a

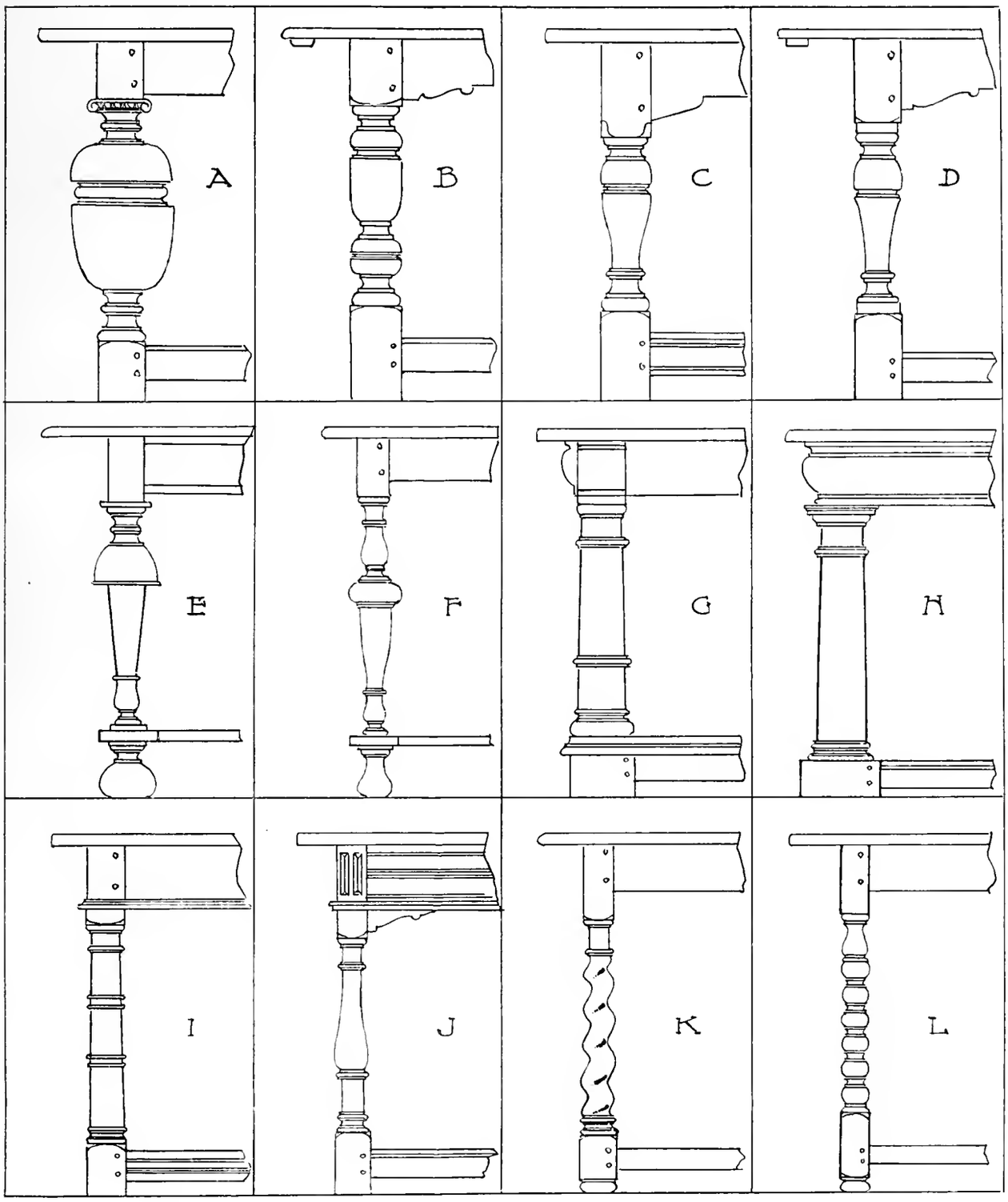


Fig. 180.

TYPES OF TURNED TABLE LEGS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

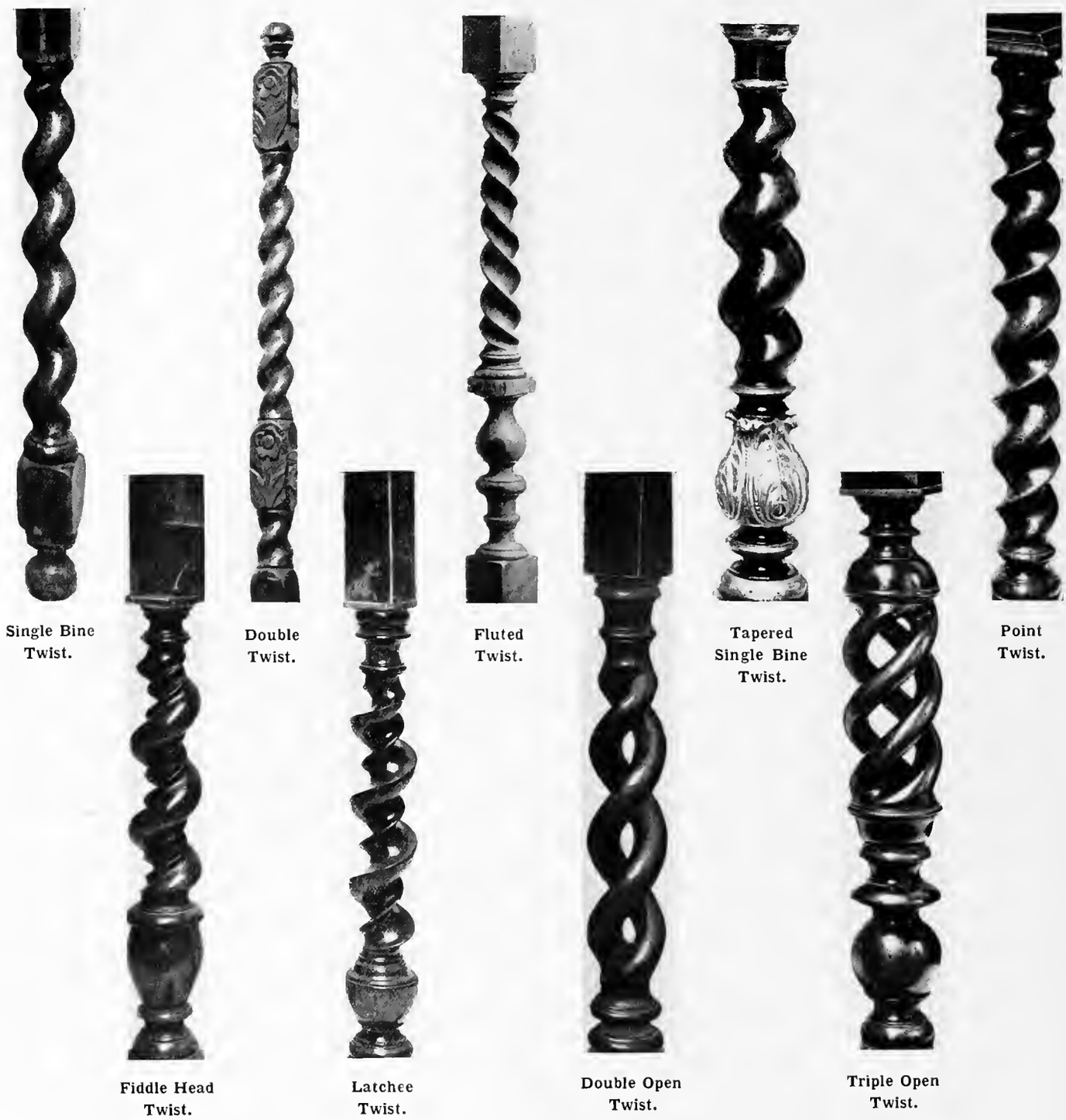


Fig. 181.

TYPES OF TWIST- OR SPIRAL-TURNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

training of the eye and a taste in details and proportions which make the turned balusters of this period real works of art,—a delight to the connoisseur. The altar-railing from New Romney Church, Fig. 179, is given here to show this perfection in detail, and skill in design, of the wood-turners of the early Orange years. The beauty of these balusters, the subtlety of each line and member can only be appreciated on careful examination. It is only when a memory copy is made, and compared with the original, that the full idea of how much has been overlooked or ill-remembered becomes apparent even to a trained draughtsman.

We have been concerned, in this chapter, chiefly with the evolution of table-leg turning. It is only just before the eighteenth century is reached that shaping (such as in the instance of the cabriole leg) begins to usurp the place of turning. The subject here concerning itself with the development of the solid oak table, some later forms which are associated, almost entirely, with the use of walnut and veneering have not

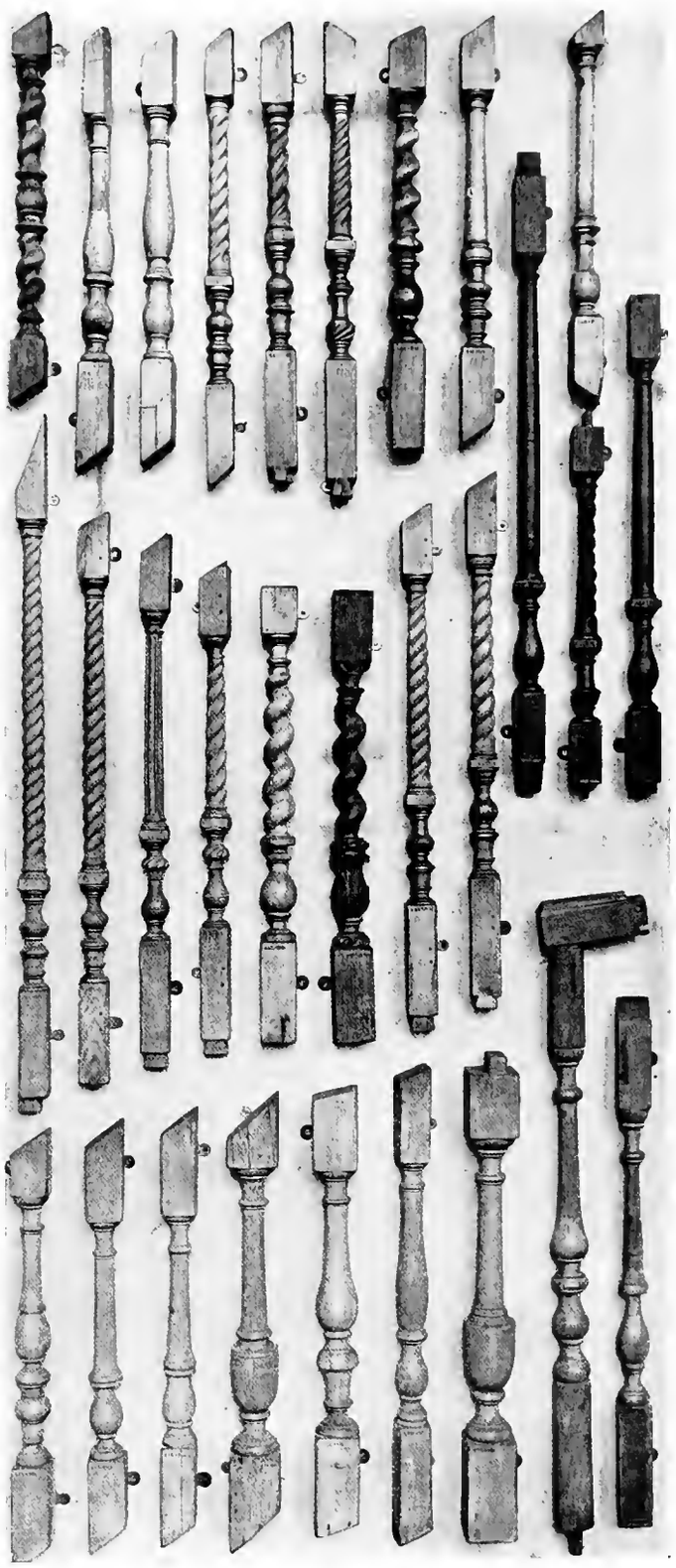


Fig. 182.
TYPES OF BALUSTER TURNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

been illustrated. The diagram, Fig. 180, may be of some little service in tracing this evolution of the turned leg on seventeenth-century tables. A writer of an illustrated book, such as this, who has many photographs before him, a far greater number than it is possible to reproduce in a work of this size, has still the advantage over his readers of being able to trace developments from example to example, which, although evident to him on comparison, cannot be stated other than empirically without the use of lavish illustration to prove his statements, which is here impossible. These twelve examples are not actual copies from existing tables; the idea has been rather to include several variations in the one type, in order to explain, pictorially, the evolution of form. Thus A must be taken as an example which includes all the bulbous-leg forms of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, where the squares above and below are pared down, almost disproportionately, in order to emphasise the bulb itself. The type which is contained in the one square of wood, without any diminishing of the squares, is shown in B. The development towards the inverted vase-baluster is shown in C, and in D the cup-turning of the later walnut period is suggested. The true Orange baluster-leg, with inverted cup, is shown in E, and F is another variation of the same form, found on tables, chairs and the turned-leg stands of marqueterie or veneered chests or cabinets shortly before 1700. G marks a return to the early column-leg, other varieties of which are given in H and I. The vase-baluster, J, can be traced back to the forms of C and D. The reversal of the leg is not such an advance as one would expect, as, in the making of these tables, the legs are received from the turner, to be framed together by the cabinet-maker. At this stage, to view the leg upside down is a procedure which would occur, obviously, and it would be found, in some instances,—as for example in D,—that this reversal might be an advantage rather than a defect. The legs once framed together, as a table, this turning upside down would cease to be a possibility.

To close this series, K may be taken as representative of the Restoration twist and L of the Commonwealth bobbin-turning. The dates of the inceptions of the various forms have already been stated, at an earlier stage in this chapter, and recapitulation is unnecessary here. This subject of turning, especially that of lathe twisting, however, is so fascinating, as illustrating not only the evolution of fashion but also the progression of the art of the wood-turner, that the two remaining pages, Figs. 181 and 182, may be of service, in showing what was achieved by the aid of the lathe and gouge during the latter half of the seventeenth and the first years of the eighteenth centuries. The illustrations are, for the most part, self-explanatory, and it is hardly necessary to point out that the various patterns do not differ, other than in bulk of timber, whether used for the legs of tables or chairs, the balusters of stairs or the stands of cabinets.

Chapter III.

The Development of the English Oak Chair.

IT has already been stated at the outset of this book, that chairs, with their kindred pieces, settees, stools, forms or benches, occupy a place apart from other furniture, for the various reasons given in that introductory chapter. While this isolated character of the English chair has been thus insisted upon, the statement is true only of its later development, that is, when it becomes a chair in such a form that it cannot be styled by any other name. Actually, the progenitor of the chair is the ecclesiastical seat, such as the bishop or abbot's throne, the choir stall, the pew, or the bench. It is not exactly true to say that the chair was not known, as such, in the fifteenth century (as illustrated examples on subsequent pages will show), but it is so nearly the fact that the exceptions given may be stated as proving the rule.

It may be necessary, at the very beginning of this chapter, to define what the term "chair" really does, and does not, imply, and to find a descriptive formula which shall include any type which may arise, and yet exclude anything else. This is not so easy as would, at first, appear. We have to postulate, if possible, a material, a form and a function, yet none of the three admits of exact definition. Chairs, as we know, are usually made from wood, yet one made from iron or stone does not cease to be a chair on this account alone. We have cane or wicker chairs, for example, which one does not call by another name because they are constructed from another material than timber. If we describe a chair as a stool on four legs, with a back, and sometimes with arms, and its function to support a sitter, we have to exclude many pieces which are true chairs and yet are not supported on four legs. If the fifteenth-century box-type be admitted as a chair,—which it is,—we must include, in the same category, choir stalls, pews and thrones. Actually, the earlier forms of the chair do not conform to any formula which would describe, adequately, the types known to us at the present day. Even the definition as a seat for one person, with a back, with or without arms, made from wood, which can be moved from place to place, does not apply in all cases, as a chair may be fixed to the floor.

There are several reasons why the church stall or pew will repay examination and comparison, in this connection. The stall is, undoubtedly, the forerunner of the chair.

Stalls and pews were made in such numbers, that they served to establish types. They have, as a general rule, been preserved, and are available for such examination and comparison. They represent, in a general way, the fashion of their time, in its best sense, as the mediæval carpenter gave his finest work to his Church. Stalls and pews are, therefore, not only chair prototypes ; they show the highest class of work prevailing at their period and in the districts where they were made. Lastly, they possess an advantage in being, comparatively, immovable. They represent, therefore, the types of their locality in an unmistakable way ; we may be certain, in nearly every case, that a Devonshire pew, for instance, has been made locally, has not been moved to the one village or county from another, and that it is a good example of the skill and taste of its time, and not a depraved example, representing a sporadic fashion or no fashion at all.

We can begin with the square box-end pew of the Devonshire type, such as in Horwood Church, Fig. 183. These pews date from the middle of the fifteenth century, and are late for their style, which shows the transition from the Curvilineal Gothic to the Perpendicular. That these were the private pews of local families is indicated by the heraldic shields and initials on the second, fourth and fifth pews in the illustration. The last two are shown in better detail, in Fig. 184.

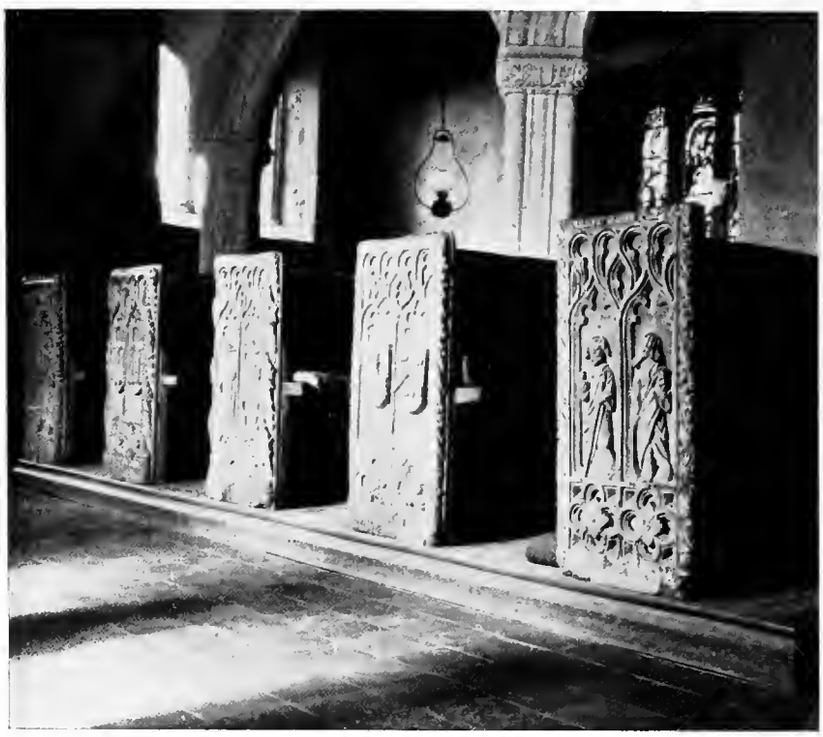


Fig. 183.
HORWOOD CHURCH, N. DEVON.
The square box-ended Devonshire type of bench or pew.
Date about 1450.

The dawn of the Renaissance can be seen in the two pew-ends from Coldridge Church, Fig. 185, dating from about 1500. The suggestion of the linen-fold pattern between the fret-tracery of the end on the right hand of the illustration, and its actual presence in

the back of the other, is always a sure indication of either the very close of the fifteenth or the dawn of the sixteenth century.

The two pew-ends from Lapford Church, Fig. 186, carry us well into the sixteenth century, as the purely Renaissance foliated heads, in the Italian manner transmuted through the French of the Francis I period, indicate a date not earlier than 1520, and possibly some decade or two later.

While the square-ended pew is typical of Devonshire, there are rare exceptions, such as at Atherington, Fig. 187. A crocketted pew-end, however, is not only very unusual in Devonshire; it is exceptional in any part of England. Atherington is a church rich in woodwork, even for Devonshire, which, in the quality of its ecclesiastical furnishings, is not far behind the wealthy East Anglian counties. In several of the Devonshire churches, also, chancel screens can still be found, with their rood-lofts almost intact, as at Swimbridge and Atherington, and one is spared the melancholy sight of the fine carved and painted woodwork, of the most wonderful period of English joinery and colour decoration, left only as magnificent ruins after the purposed destruction by Puritan and other vandals.

Without a wealth of illustration, which would be out of place in a book of this

Fig. 184.
DETAIL OF THE PEWS, FIG. 183.

kind, it would be impossible to show the distinctive types of pew and bench-ends which prevail in various well-defined localities of England. There are the Lincolnshire, the East Anglian, the Midland, the Northern, the Somerset, the Devonshire, and the South-Eastern, or Kentish types, all well-defined from the fifteenth almost to the beginning of the eighteenth century. The succeeding examples, therefore, will be briefly referred to, and only from the point of view of illustrating the genesis and growth of the English chair, which is the principal subject of this chapter.

Two views of the benches in Wetherden Church, Suffolk, are given in Figs. 188 and 189. The ends are of the buttress type, capped with grotesque figures of animals. Wetherden illustrates the East-Anglian type of poppy-head (from *poupée*—a doll), a district which includes parts of Cambridge and Lincoln. The representation of animals carved in wood is also general in Norfolk and Suffolk. At Bradfield St. George, Fig. 190, the grotesque figure caps the bench end ; at Hitcham, Fig. 191, it surmounts the buttress which forms the arm. At Stowlangtoft, Figs. 192, 193 and 194, each one of the richly-carved benches has this grotesque device on the arms, and the ends of the choir stalls,

Fig. 185.
COLDRIDGE CHURCH, DEVON.
Bench Ends.
Date about 1500.

Figs. 195, 196, and 197, finish with beautifully carved figures, of which Fig. 195, a priest standing at a reading desk, will show the fine execution and conception. These stall-ends are late fifteenth-century East Anglian work at its best, and can be coupled, both in point of design and execution, with the chancel screens at Southwold, Ranworth, Bramfield or Ludham, or the font-cover at Ufford. Brandeston Church has also some interesting bench-ends, slightly earlier than at Stowlangtoft and not so fine in execution. Fig. 198 shows two of these. It must be remembered, in examining these ends, which, although they are not of the very finest, are still of high quality, that the church which contains them is situated in a Suffolk village with a population, in 1900, of only 347 persons. That Brandeston may have been larger in the fifteenth century is possible; it was undoubtedly richer, but there is no reason to believe that it was ever other than a sparsely populated village.

If the pew or choir-stall be the progenitor of the English chair, the type of the latter, known as miserere seats, illustrates the development, in a very marked degree, if they are removed from their surrounding woodwork or surmounting canopies. The practice of putting these stalls together in rows, where twelve seats, for example, have only eleven ends, destroys the chair-like appearance which they would exhibit were each seat a separate unit. In Figs. 199 and 200 accident has done that which custom denied. Here is one of these choir-stalls separated from its fellows, and its strong resemblance to an early chair will be noticed. Actually it is far less clerical in appearance, in this detached form, than are many early chairs which are almost wholly secular in character.

A bench from Rougham, Fig. 201, of the very late fifteenth century, with large and finely carved poppy-heads and solid-cut traceried ends, closes this series of the ecclesiastical progenitors of the English domestic chair. It must not be imagined, however, that the transition from

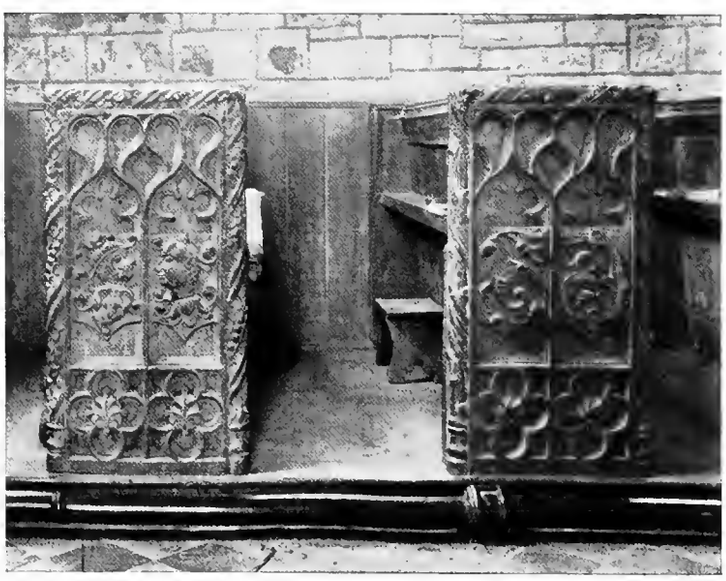


Fig. 186.
LAPFORD CHURCH, DEVON.
Bench Ends.
The Devonshire type of 1520–30.

the clerical stall to the secular chair marks any distinct change of type. Chairs at the end of the fifteenth century were much too rare to have established a fashion of their own. Apart from being highly exceptional at this period, they are so special in character, and obviously so inspired from clerical sources, that they may be styled rather as church stalls which are not in their proper habitat.

Two examples are given here which would be typical, were others known to exist of which these could be regarded as the type. The first is the Coronation Chair from Westminster Abbey, Fig. 202, the second a chair from St. Mary's Hall at Coventry, Fig. 203. The former has a well-attested history, and can safely be assigned to the fourteenth century, and the latter, although not so well recorded, is equally unmistakable as an example of the fifteenth. Making due allowance for the inexactitude in the early records, the Coronation Chair appears to have been made to contain the "Stone of Destiny," which Edward I brought back from Scone in 1296. There is no reason to doubt this, but whether the chair was made at this date or many years later, is not certain. Apart from the fact that its style is that of the end, rather than the beginning of the fourteenth century,—to say nothing of the closing years of the thirteenth,—there are signs which indicate, beyond doubt, that the chair was, at one period, decorated and emblazoned with gold and colours, if not with raised and gilded gesso. The merest vestiges of this colour-decoration remain, as the chair is in a deplorable state, several generations of ignorant vandals having been allowed to carve their initials on it until every available inch of space has been covered. The pinnacles are missing; perhaps they were removed and taken away as keepsakes!

Fig. 187.
ATHERINGTON CHURCH, DEVON.
Rare crocketted type of pew-end.
Late fifteenth century.

Figs. 188 and 189.

WETHERDEN CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

The East Anglian type of poppy-headed bench-end, buttress-type, of the late fifteenth century.

Fig. 190.

CHURCH OF BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE, SUFFOLK.

Bench-ends surmounted by grotesques.

Fig. 191.

HITCHAM CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Buttress type with grotesques on arm.

The East Anglian late fifteenth-century bench-end with grotesque figures.

Figs. 192 and 193.

STOWLANGTOFT CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Pew ends carved with grotesques.

We do not usually associate colour-decoration on wood with the beginning of the fourteenth century; hardly with its close. There is the possibility, of course, that this colour was a later application, but the chair has the appearance of having been designed and made specially for colour and gesso, in the same manner as the East Anglian chancel screens, and the general style of the back, with its crocketted head, is late fourteenth or even early fifteenth century in character.

The chair in St. Mary's Hall, Figs. 203 to 210, is in much more perfect condition, and while only a fragment, is well preserved. That it was never intended for decoration in colours, nor has ever been either painted or partially gilded, is almost certain. Its original finish was a glossy varnish, or in other words, much the same as at the present day. This chair has been considered at such length and detail in the "*Burlington Magazine*"[1] that the statements made in that article may be summarised and repeated here.

[1] No. CCXXIII, Vol. XXXIX, "An Oak Chair in St. Mary's Hall, Coventry," Herbert Cescinsky, October, 1921.

Fig. 194.

STOWLANGTOFT CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

The finest East Anglian type of bench-end of the late fifteenth century.

Fig. 195.

STOWLANGTOFT CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Carved stall-end, about 1480.

Fig. 196.

STOWLANGTOFT CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Carved stall-end, about 1480.

This is a civic or state chair ; it has only a remote clerical connection, if any. The pinnacles, which are quite original, represent on the dexter, Fig. 206, the Plantagenet lions of England[1] (the "leones-leopardes" of Glover's Roll of Henry III) supporting the portion of a crown, which, when complete was probably royal. On the sinister are the arms of Coventry, the elephant and castle, Fig. 207. The chair is only a fragment, being complete at the one end, Fig. 208, but having two mortises at the other, Fig. 209, obviously for the tenons of two panel rails. The commencement of the panel-groove can be seen above the lower mortise, and this steps forward immediately, to house the applied tracery. So much is, therefore, certain, that a traceried panel, similar to that on the front, Fig. 204, with rails above and below, must have fitted on the chair on its right-hand side. The question now arises, was the chair originally of double or triple form ? There are several reasons to justify the latter assumption.

[1] The unicorn on the sinister side of the Royal arms dates from the reign of James I only.

Fig. 197.
STOWLANGTOFT CHURCH, SUFFOLK.
Carved stalls. Date about 1480.

Fig. 198.

BRANDESTON CHURCH, SUFFOLK.

Pew-ends of buttress-type, carved with poppy-heads and grotesque figures. Date about 1460.

Coventry is an ancient city, renowned in the fifteenth century for its woollens and dyes; hence the old saying, "True as Coventry blue."[1] It was visited, on several occasions, by Royalty, and is reputed to have once housed a royal prisoner in the person of Mary, Queen of Scots. The chair is in St. Mary's Hall, a building erected in the early part of the fifteenth century for the united guilds of St. Mary, St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine; a Trinity, be it noted. The Great Hall, which measures 76 ft. in length, 30 ft. in span and 34 ft. in height, has a dais at its end with a perpendicular Great Window, divided into three sections by two vertical mullions. Below this window hangs a fine Arras tapestry in three divisions, corresponding with the mullions of the window above.

That this chair was intended to stand on this dais, under the window and in front of this tapestry, is unquestionable. A double chair would have been incongruous, and if one of the seats were intended for royalty,—which is exceedingly likely, as one of the pinnacles has the Royal arms, and the tapestry has, on its right- and left-hand panels the figures of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou, and was specifically woven for the

[1] Blue was the royal colour in the fifteenth century.

place it occupies at present,—the other seat would have had an equal dignity. The double-seat theory is also not tenable for another reason; while there are unmistakable indications of the fixing of a back, there are none of a seat.

A hypothetical reconstruction of this chair has been attempted in Fig. 211. The absence of a fixing for the seat can here be explained satisfactorily. The chair would be occupied by royalty only on very rare occasions. The central seat would be rich in character, with covering, probably, of cloth of gold. It would be one to be preserved with every care, as apart from its intrinsic value, the Coventry burghers would aim at keeping it clean and free from wear. In addition it would not be left in situ, for anyone to sit upon at pleasure, with loss to its royal dignity. The natural result would be that the seat would be in the form of a

Figs. 199 and 200.

OCCOLD, SUFFOLK. SECTION OF CHOIR STALLS.

28 ins. wide across base. 3 ft. 5 ins. high over all.
1 ft. 4 ins. deep over all.

Latter half of fifteenth century.

cushioned box, which would be removed, when not in use, and its place left vacant.

The massive cills at the foot of the present chair, at front and back (see Figs. 204 and 205), exhibit signs of having been cut. They were probably carried through, bridging the space between, and bracing the outer chairs together, and were further extended on either side to hold the banner standards of the Guilds. The Royal banner would, naturally, be displayed centrally, behind the chair.

Fig. 201.
ROUGHAM CHURCH, SUFFOLK.
Back and end of oak bench.
Date about 1510.

Another point in favour of this triple-chair theory is that the number three figures everywhere. Both the great window and the tapestry below are in three divisions. The Guild Hall of St. Mary is dedicated to the Trinity of St. Mary, St. John and St. Catherine. Coventry as one of the strongholds of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, would give their Saint the post of honour, in the centre of the back of the middle chair or throne. The side spandrel of the chair illustrated here (Fig. 208) is carved with the effigy of St. Mary; its missing fellow on the right was probably devoted to St. Catherine. Another theory suggests itself. The central seat may have been movable so that the royal stool could be taken away, and its place occupied by another, not so ornate in character, and the throne would then be used by the Masters of the three Guilds.

A resemblance will be noticed between the grotesque carvings of the arms (although these have been mutilated, apparently with a set purpose) and those on some of the clerical benches already illustrated, Fig. 198 for example. It was usual, even in the case of choir-stalls and misericords, to introduce purely secular carving, often of questionable decency. Perhaps the arms of this chair were carved in this manner, and a wave of puritanism condemned them to mutilation. Some of these misericord carvings are exceedingly quaint. Thus, in the Victoria and Albert Museum is an example, shown here in Fig. 212, where the mediæval carpenter is instructing his apprentice in the craft of the woodworker. Representations or pictures of this kind, in wood, must have had

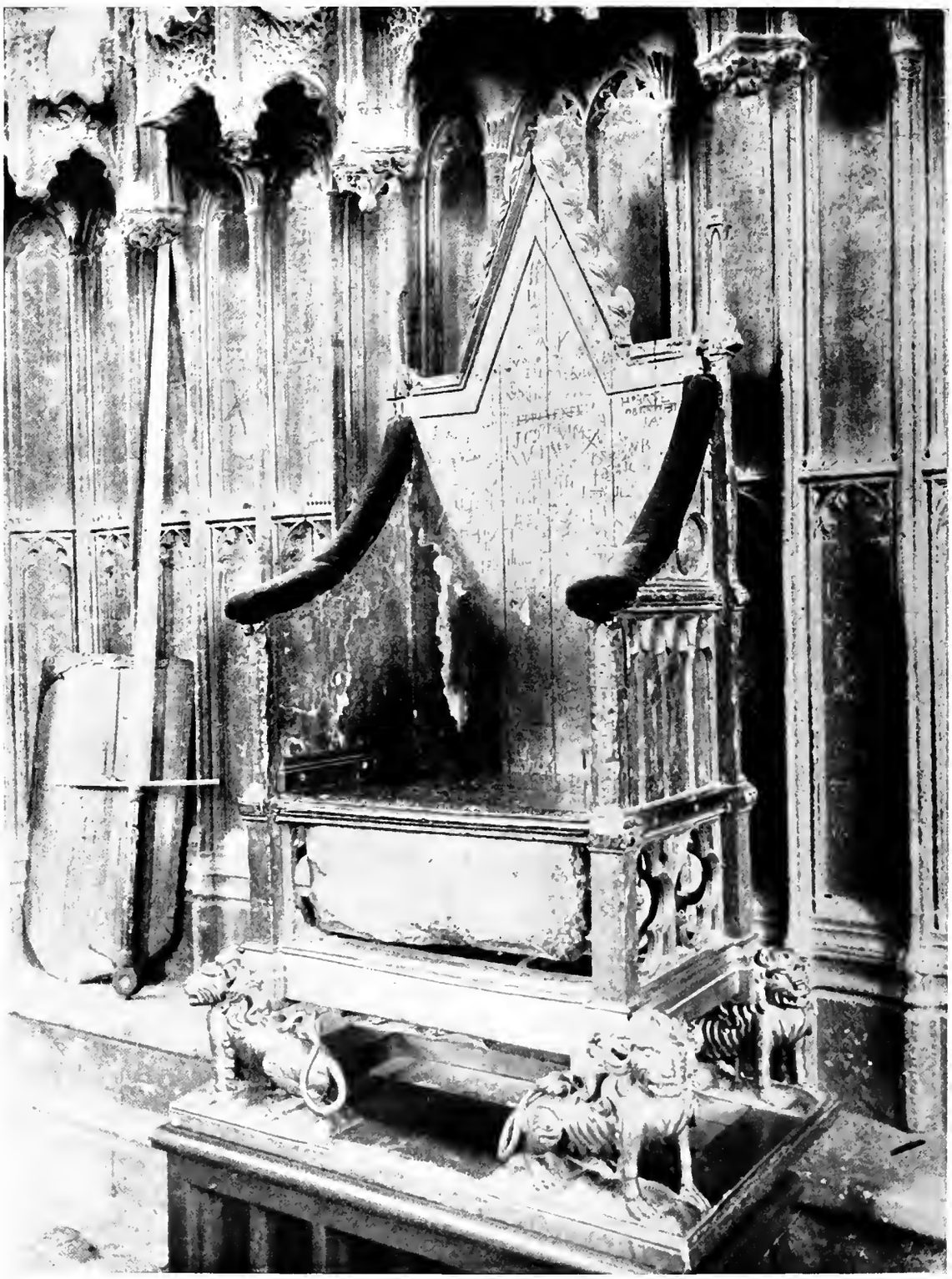


Fig. 202.

OAK CORONATION CHAIR.

Westminster Abbey.

Fourteenth century.

Fig. 204.
Front view.

Fig. 205.
Back view.

Fig. 206.
Left-hand pinnacle.

Fig. 203.
General view.

Fig. 207.
Right-hand pinnacle.

AN OAK CHAIR IN ST. MARY'S HALL, COVENTRY.
Mid-fifteenth century.

Fig. 208.

End view. Left.

Fig. 209.

End view. Right.

Fig. 210.

Detail of top rail.

AN OAK CHAIR IN ST. MARY'S HALL, COVENTRY.

a very wide appeal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, difficult to comprehend at the present day, when there are so many other diversions. In the Middle Ages, few outside of the church could read or write, and books of any kind were correspondingly small in number. Illustration on paper or vellum was more meagre still. Pictures were scarce, and drawings still rarer. The only pictorial representations were in missals or illuminated manuscripts,—and they were not for the multitude ;—painted effigies of saints on chancel and other screens, and these secular carvings. They were in churches not only because the Church aggrandised all decoration, but also because clerical edifices were the mediæval recreation halls. Providing the sanctuary of the chancel were not invaded, the nave was the common property of the parish, and was used, when services were not being held, as the parish hall. Perhaps this accounts, in some measure, for the semi-clerical character of many of the Guild Halls of the same period, the rival attractions to the churches of the Middle Ages.

The original abundance of these pictorial carvings must have been almost incredible. Apart from their perishable character, in the natural course of things, we have at least four distinct periods of purposed destruction ; under Henry VIII, Edward VI, Elizabeth and Cromwell. Yet the English parish churches of the present day can

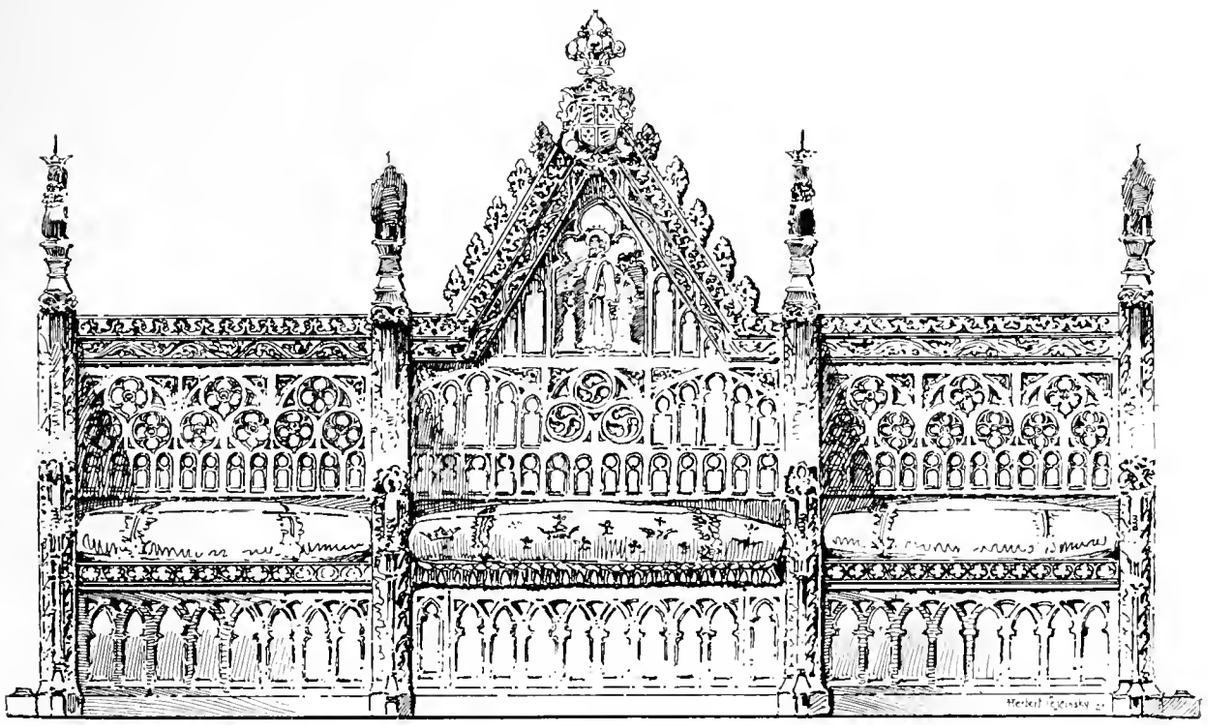


Fig. 211.

HYPOTHETICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CHAIR, FIGS. 204 TO 210.

From a drawing by Herbert Cescinsky.

Fig. 212.
OAK MISERICORD.
Fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

furnish innumerable examples of wood-carving and colour-decoration, which give some idea, yet a meagre one, of the vast richness in similar work which must have existed in the Golden Age of the fifteenth century. That the Guilds, which began to assume a prominence after the fifth Crusade (1203–5) were responsible for much of this work is undoubted. At the close of the fourteenth century they had acquired such power and influence that they rivalled the monastic establishments in the artistic education of the artisan. From these Guilds were selected the King's master-craftsmen, men who were well paid, highly considered, and often invested with delegated autocratic powers. They were probably members, to a man, of the powerful Cluniac order, the influence of which was paramount in artistic Europe from the eleventh to the fourteenth century.

Chairs of the last years of the fifteenth century are exceedingly rare pieces, as they did not replace stools, and become general articles of household furniture, until more than a century later. Fig. 213 is an example from the Mayor's Parlour in St. Mary's Hall, Coventry. Apart from the addition of the high extra back (to serve as a fire-screen, as this chair is used at the end of a fine draw-table, with its back to the fire-place), the bracing of the seat to the front legs, and the absence of the original finials to the back, the chair is in original condition, and wonderfully preserved considering its age. It has a bright varnish finish and in general tone is a fine golden-brown. Some

additional measurements to those given under the illustration may be of service. The top of the original back measures 2 ft. $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins. across, and from the seat to the machicolated cresting 1 ft. $9\frac{3}{4}$ ins. The panels in the back are 1 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. in height, with a top rail of $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. From the floor to the top of the mortise at the side of the front leg (the tenon is carried through) is 1 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins., so the chair has lost little, if any, of its original seat-height, especially as it may have been provided with a squab-cushion originally. The legs are $4\frac{1}{4}$ ins. in width on the front. From the seat to the under side of the overhang of the arms, measures 10 ins., and the arm-caps taper from 2 ins. at the front to $1\frac{3}{4}$ ins. at their junction with the back. The seat is original, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ ins. in thickness. The bottom edge of the back rail is 3 ins. above the top edge of the side rail. The front seat-rail is 3 ins. by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. The side-rails are tenoned right through the back legs. The entire chair is well-constructed, in the skilful manner of its period, and is made from selected quartered and sawn English oak. The fine oak draw-table from the same room is illustrated in Fig. 146 of the preceding chapter.

Fig. 213.

OAK CHAIR.

2 ft. 6 ins. wide across front of seat by 3 ft. $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. total height.

Late fifteenth century, 1490–1500.

St. Mary's Hall, Coventry.

Fig. 214 is more than half a century later in date, about 1540–50, and is the real type of a Tudor chair. The seat is boxed in, with a cupboard below open at the back. The arms are of similar form to the chair from Coventry, but the linen-fold panels are of late pattern, and the well-defined Renaissance ornament above shows that the Gothic traditions had departed at the

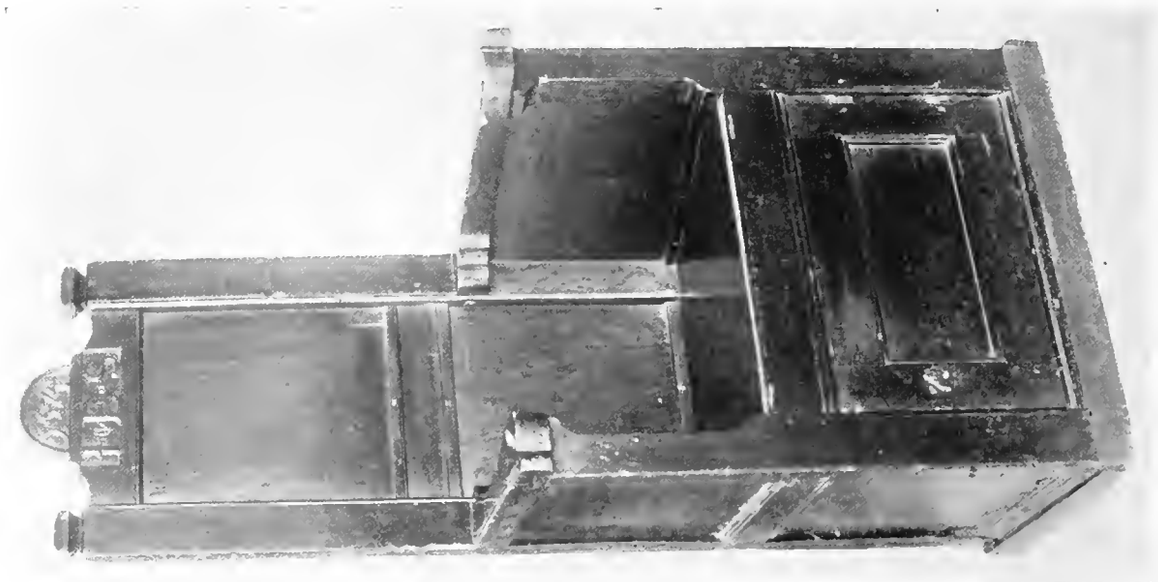


Fig. 215.
OAK CHAIR.
4 ft. 7 ins. high by 2 ft. 2 ins. wide by 2 ft. 6½ ins. deep.
Dated 1574.

Fig. 214.
OAK CHAIR.
4 ft. 1 in. high by 2 ft. 3½ ins. wide by 2 ft. 6 ins. deep.
Mid-sixteenth century.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

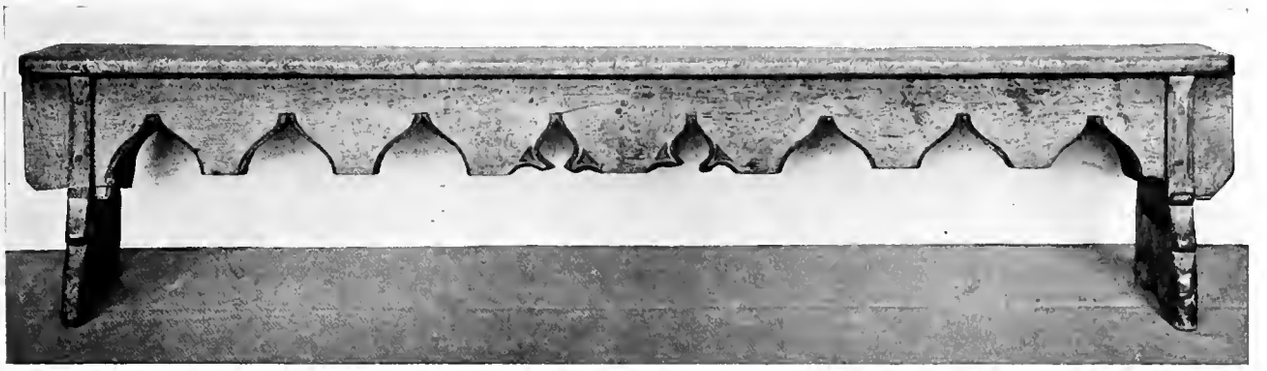


Fig. 216.
OAK STOOL.
7 ft. 11 ins. long by 1 ft. 8½ ins. high by 10¾ ins. deep over top, 12¼ ins. at base.
Mid-fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

date when this chair was made. Fig. 215 is later, dated 1574, and the boxed seat has the door on the front. The purpose of these cupboards under the seat can be readily surmised. The back is tall, and the chair has an important appearance, which was evidently intentional, in spite of the fact that it is practically without carving. There is no doubt that, in the designing of many of these Tudor chairs, the earlier models were freely copied and adapted. They were important pieces, and were often signed and dated, in the manner of this example, the initials "J.E.S." and the date 1574 being carved on the cresting rail of the back, an honour shared only with the chest and the standing cupboard. The skirting to the base is a later addition.

Fig. 217.
OAK STOOL.
1 ft. 10 ins. long by 1 ft. 10 ins. high by 1 ft. 1 in. deep.
Early sixteenth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 218.

OAK UPHOLSTERED CHAIR.

Late sixteenth century. Lord Amherst.

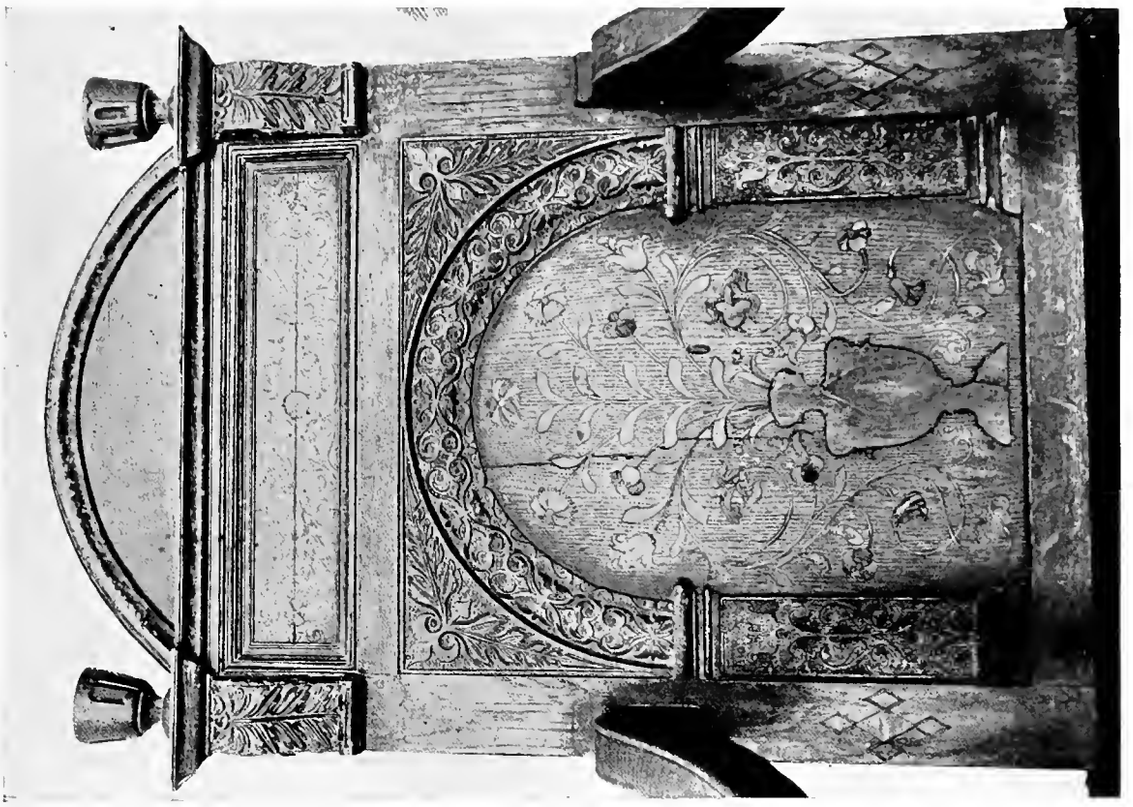


Fig. 220.
THE BACK OF THE CHAIR, FIG. 219.
Barking Church, Suffolk.

(See next page for sizes.)

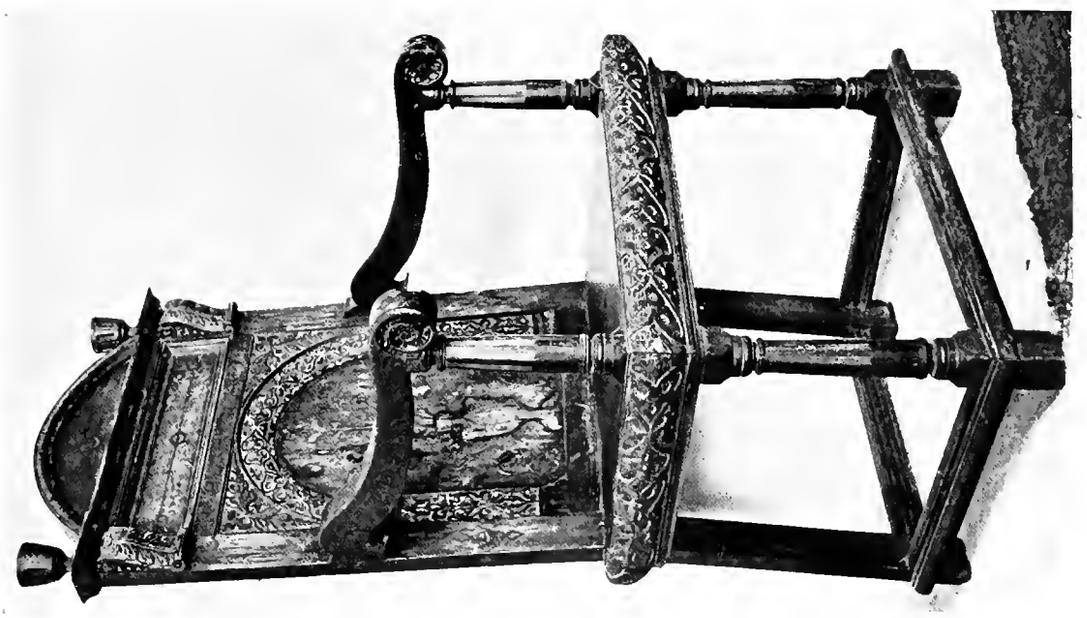


Fig. 219.
OAK INLAID CHAIR.
Date about 1590–1600.

Fig. 221.
ANOTHER VIEW OF THE CHAIR, FIG. 219.

Floor to top of straight capping rail, 4 ft. 1 in.
Floor to top of seat, 1 ft. $7\frac{3}{4}$ ins.
Seat to top of arm, 1 ft.
Seat cushion moulding, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins.
Frieze panel of back (including mouldings), $5\frac{1}{4}$ ins.
Back, outside uprights, 1 ft. $10\frac{3}{4}$ ins. wide.
Back panel, outside pilasters, 1 ft. $5\frac{3}{4}$ ins. wide.
Extreme over front of seat, 2 ft. $4\frac{7}{8}$ ins. wide.
Outside squares of front legs, 2 ft. $1\frac{3}{8}$ ins. wide.
Depth over front and back legs, 1 ft. $5\frac{3}{4}$ ins.
Pitch from seat line to top of capping, $4\frac{1}{4}$ ins.

The chair being a rare article of furniture during the sixteenth century and almost unknown in the fifteenth, the usual seat was either the long or short stool. Even after the Restoration, when chairs were made in considerable numbers, the stool maintained its popularity, owing, possibly, to its greater portability. Oak chairs are heavy pieces, as, apart from the intrinsic weight of the wood itself,—which is, approximately, double that of walnut,—chairs until the Restoration were heavily made and framed. It is partly due to this fact, no doubt, that so many have persisted to our day in good preservation.

Fig. 222.
OAK STOOL.
Date about 1600.

The early stools, from the mid-fifteenth to the early sixteenth century, are usually of the one type, with solid ends, held together with deep framing-pieces halved into the trestles, and with tops pegged to the framing and supports. Fig. 216 from Barningham Hall is a long stool of this kind, dating from about 1450–60. The front "apron" is cut out in the form of eight ogival arches, the two in the centre, only, being cusped, and this is original, no signs being visible of cuspings on the other archings. This form, which was discovered in the stables of the Hall, is very complete for its period. The present building only dates from about 1612, but it was erected on the site of a much earlier house, to the furnishings of which this long stool probably belonged, or it may have formed a part of the possessions of Sir William Paston, who acquired the old manor house of the Winter family, on the site of which he erected his new hall.

The date assigned to this piece, by the Museum Authorities, that of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, is somewhat early, as the form of the trestle ends is later than the pattern of the cusped arches, and it is the latest feature which establishes a period. The cusping also,

Fig. 223.

OAK UPHOLSTERED CHAIR.

Height, 2 ft. 11⅞ ins.; width, 1 ft. 10 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 9½ ins.

c. 1600. Victoria and Albert Museum.

is more mannered than one would expect, at least in the late fourteenth century. It is safer, therefore, to ascribe a date towards the middle of the fifteenth century rather than at its beginning. The back rail of this form, which is missing, but of which indications remain, was probably a plain board, as the cutting of the back of the trestle-ends suggest that the piece was made to stand against a wall.

The early sixteenth-century type of single stool, such as was the usual seat at table for meals, is shown in Fig. 217. This is a full expression of the manner and constructive methods of its time. The turned leg does not appear on stools or chairs until the very close of the sixteenth century. It is somewhat earlier in the case of tables.

It must not be assumed that the art of the wood-turner was not known in Tudor times. Actually, in some of the inventories of the mid-sixteenth century, certain

Fig. 224.

Date about 1620.

Fig. 225.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

OAK CHAIRS.

Midland Type.

"turneyed" chairs are mentioned. These will be again referred to at a later stage in this chapter, with the reasons why no examples of the original early period appear to have survived.

While upholstered chairs and settees became usual in wealthy houses towards the end of the reign of James I,—the well-known examples from Knole Park are representative of this period,—the fashion for upholstery first appears to have arisen, in England, in the years from 1590 to 1600. The device of padding with horse-hair or tow, and covering with fabrics, such as silk or velvet, originated from Italy, rather than from France. These upholstered chairs and settees, however, are too rare at any period in England, up to the close of the seventeenth century, to enable any progression of types to be illustrated. Fig. 218 is only given to show an upholstered chair of the

Fig. 226.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1630.
St. Michael's Church, St. Albans.

Fig. 227.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1640.
St. Michael's Church, St. Albans.

X-form, such as was made in England at a date from 1590 to 1645–50, in very rare instances only, and in houses where a high standard of comfort and luxury was attempted.

Chairs with turned legs, prior to the accession of James I, are very rare, and usually of high quality. The fine chair from Barking Church, Suffolk, here illustrated in Figs. 219 to 221, is one of this late sixteenth-century kind and of East Anglian origin. The use of the pilastered arch in early chair backs and chests nearly always suggests Norfolk or Suffolk. Occasionally, especially in Kent, this arcaded form was adopted, but the arches lack the finish and proportion of those in East Anglian work, and are nearly always flatter.

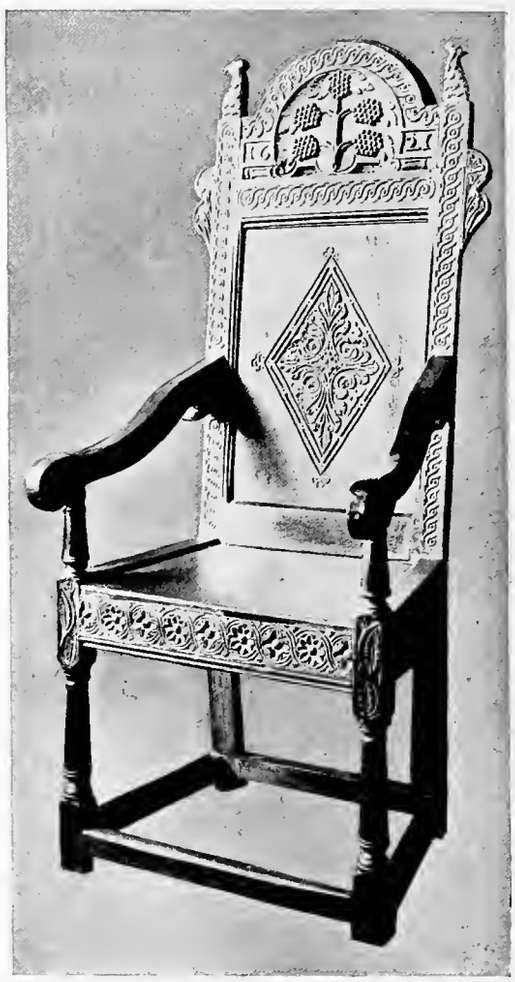


Fig. 229.
OAK CHAIR.
Dated 1621.

Fig. 228.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1630–40.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

In this chair from Barking Church, the seat-rail, of inverted thumb-section, is carved with the late form of Elizabethan strap-work. The front legs are turned, with flutes,

of light wood, inlaid in the shafts, with the arm-balusters to correspond. The arms sweep downward in a graceful line, and finish, on their supports, in well-carved volutes. The central panel, and frieze of the backs, are inlaid with holly and other woods cut into the solid oak. Of this inlay, the central vase has fallen out and been replaced with a piece of plain veneer, cut to the original shape. The cup-like finials, which are later additions, were, probably, of the same form as this vase, and may have been inlaid with flutes, in the same way as the arm-balusters. The arch of the back is in flattened ovolo-section, finely carved with strapping and scrolling. The small ogee cornice breaks forward over carved trusses, finished on the uprights of the back-framing with laterally fluted scrolls. The lunetted cresting is a later addition, or a replacement, crude in

Fig. 230.
OAK CHAIR-TABLE.
Date about 1650.

every way, compared with the rich and finely-designed chair below. The shaping of the under-side of the arm remains a popular pattern for half a century. It will be noticed again in Figs. 234 and 235, two chairs some fifty years later in date.

The very charming little stool, Fig. 222, similar both in design and county of origin to the chair from Barking Church, may be described as the 1600 type. The inverted thumb-moulded frieze, carved with a centred gadroon, is applied over the upper squares of the delicately-turned and fluted legs. The stretcher-railing is kept low to give the maximum of strength.

Upholstered chairs of the kind shown in Fig. 223, usually known as farthingale chairs, were not unusual in great houses shortly after 1600. In the Presence Chamber at Hardwick is a large set, with backs so dwarfed as to suggest that the chair was intended for use sideways, with the low back acting as an arm. The theory that these backs were provided as a concession to the large hooped skirts of the period is not tenable, as any back would incommode a lady dressed in this manner, whether high or low. That the stretcher-rails were used, apart from their constructional purpose, to keep the feet from the floors

Fig. 231.

THE OAK CHAIR-TABLE, FIG. 230.

Shown with top raised.

of this period,—which were often in a questionable state of cleanliness,—is more probable, but no chair-railing could obviate the ordeal of entering or leaving a room. Perhaps avenues in the rush-strewn floors were provided for ladies, or those who were over-nice in their habits.

These early padded back chairs, with squab-cushioned seats, were nearly always covered with rich fabrics, often an applique of gold or silver braiding on a ground of cut-pile velvet, generally of Italian, but sometimes of French origin. That these coverings were imported is suggested by the fact that petit-point needle-work or tapestry,—the making of both of which was an English art at this date, and the usual leisure-hour recreation of the noble dame and her attendants,—was so rarely used. It also suggests the further possibility that these rich fabrics were brought back to England as tourist spoils of a foreign town, and their size and shape, —bearing in mind that a finished applique panel cannot be altered easily,—may have dictated the form and proportions of these chairs. In the case of the fine set at Hardwick, there is no doubt that the coverings were designed and made for the chairs, but there are also evidences that this was not always the case. It is at the other end of the century that the age of gorgeous fabrics commences, after the Huguenots had been expelled from France with fire and sword. At the commencement of the sixteenth century, upholstery fabrics of any kind must have been exceptional, even in the houses of the wealthy, if we except

Fig. 232.
HICKORY ARM-CHAIR.
Dated 1633.
Height of back from floor, 3 ft.
Height of seat, $17\frac{3}{4}$ ins.
Width of seat at front, $22\frac{1}{2}$ ins.
Width of seat at back, 18 ins.
Depth of seat, front to back, 16 ins.

the state or principal bedchambers, the only apartments in which some degree of luxury was attempted at this period, as we have seen in the concluding chapter of the first volume of this work.

Two versions of the Midland type of arm-chair of James I period are illustrated in Figs. 224 and 225. The backs are of one panel, framed up, the top rails with low cresting cut from the solid. The legs are baluster-turned, and tied with moulded stretcher-rails. The seats are thin, cut round the squares connecting the front legs with the arm-balusters, with a small overhang, in Fig. 225 taken across the squares, but in Fig. 224 only cut between them.

Lancashire and Cheshire appear to have adopted the four petal Tudor rose and the interlacing guilloche as favourite design motives. Yorkshire chairs differ in many respects from those of Lancashire. In much the same manner as with clocks in the later eighteenth century, the Yorkshire oak chair of this early seventeenth century is generally clumsy, with crude carving in low relief.

Fig. 233.
OAK CHAIR.
Dated 1648.
W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

In Figs. 226 and 227, two chairs from St. Michael's Church, St. Albans, the general character is unusual. This is due, in great measure, to omissions and additions due to decay and restoration. Thus, the lunette panel in the cresting of the first is carved in the manner of a century later. The original top rail of the back is below this, and has lost its small trusses at each end. The central panel of the back is coarsely carved with a representation of a winged angel holding a chalice, and appears to be earlier work. The legs and arm-balusters are in the manner of the early years of the reign of Charles I. The back stretcher-rail is missing. There is so much that is exceptional and not original

to the chair, that it is impossible to postulate its locality of origin. It may be said, however, that it is not of the west or middle England types. Fig. 227 has lost its stretcher-railing entirely, and the feet are badly decayed. It is somewhat later in style than Fig. 226, and is of pronounced East Anglian character. It may be as well to notice here, that the arms of both of these chairs are of almost identical pattern. The over-

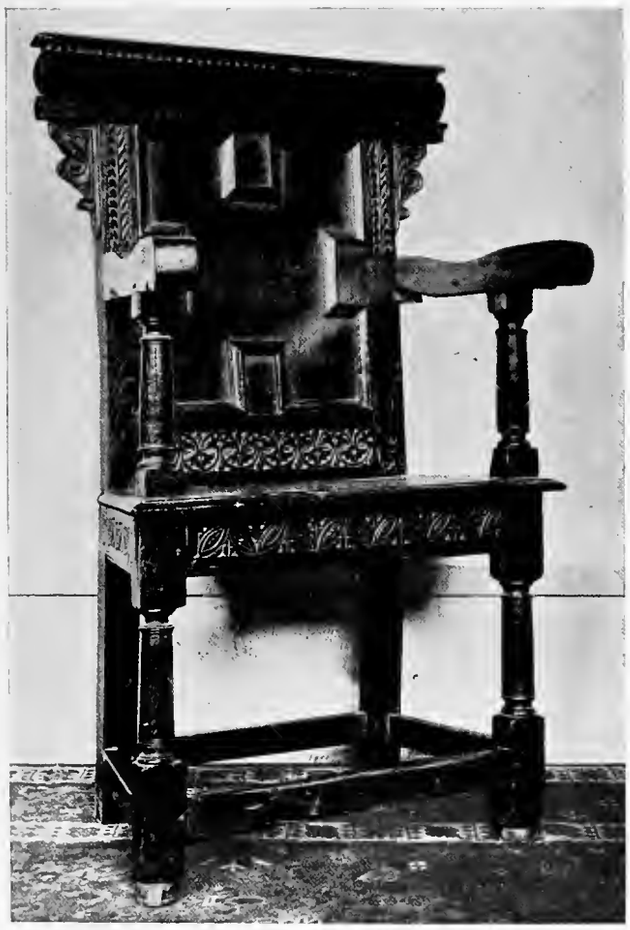


Fig. 234.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1660. St. Albans Abbey.

Fig. 235.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1650–60.

hanging back rails of both are without the original small trusses.

Whether chairs of this kind were made for Church use is problematical; many are to be found flanking altar tables in small churches throughout England. It may be that their dignity, which was still maintained during the first half of the seventeenth century, caused them to be bequeathed, as valued possessions, to the Church. In sacred buildings, as a rule, chairs are finer and in better preservation than in private hands. This may be owing to the fact that the best

were given to the Church in the original instance, and they have been more carefully preserved, and certainly less used, than would be the rule in secular houses.

Fig. 228 is the Cheshire type of oak chair of about 1630–40. The carving is in low relief, with a peculiarly soft modelled effect. There is hardly a trace of vigorous cutting, with the gouge, anywhere. The back panel is coarsely incised. The chair has lost its original board seat, its place being taken by a squab-cushion. The trusses, or earpieces to the uprights of the back framing will be noticed here. They will be found in nearly every example of these Stuart oak chairs, from 1610 to about 1660.

Fig. 229 is the work of the Welsh bordering counties, probably of Shrewsbury make. It has its original cresting, with the date 1621 carved to flank a guilloche-framed semi-circular panel, scrolled at the bottom and cut with a conventional vine tendril with leaves and grapes. The interlacing guilloche pattern is used for the styles and rails of the back framing, the bottom rail of which is a replacement. The sides of the seat framing project above the seat, which is thus sunk to receive a squab-cushion. The eagle-pinnacles, which surmount the side uprights of the back, are well conceived and executed, and give a fitting finish to a very stately chair. The columnar type of leg and arm-baluster, as in this chair, does not indicate either the manner of a locality or a defined period. It was adopted in Lancashire, Somerset, Kent, Hertfordshire and East Anglia, frequently alternating with a severely modified form of the Tudor bulb, and persists, as a favourable design, until about 1685. It may be described as the characteristic seventeenth-century front leg of English oak chairs of that

Fig. 236.
OAK CHAIR.
1660–70.
Chelsworth Church, Suffolk.

period. The modified form of the bulb-leg can be seen in the remarkable oak chair-table shown in Figs. 230 and 231. The top is formed of three boards, nearly two inches in thickness, clamped at the ends. The under side, which forms the visible back of the chair when raised, is carved with a double-headed crested eagle resting on a scrolled base, all cut from the solid wood, framed round with a narrow moulding. The top has two stout runners which are pivoted on the arm rests. Below the seat is a drawer pulling out on grooves and runners. This piece is of western-midland make and, in spite of the early appearance of the carved back, is probably of mid-seventeenth-century date. The title of a monk's bench for chairs of this kind is a misnomer; monks had almost ceased to exist in England when they were made.

To illustrate the chairs of this period in a regular order of progression as regards their dates, and at the same time to arrange them in groups showing development of type and similarity in detail, is impossible, and has not been attempted here. Chronological order has been abandoned as being of lesser importance. During the seventeenth century, articles of furniture began to increase, both in amount and variety. Apart from the era of building that commenced about 1510 and lasted, with little intermission, until almost the end of the eighteenth century (a list of important houses from 1510 to 1790 could be made with no lapse of as much as a decade between the completion of the one and the commencement of another), which gave a great impetus to the craft of the furniture maker, there was gradually emerging from the ranks of the artisans a middle class that also demanded furniture for houses of the lesser type. For such

Fig. 237.
OAK CHAIR.
1640–50.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

the interesting chair shown in Fig. 232 was probably made. The wood is hickory, with the top rails of the back inlaid with herringbone stringing of walnut and bog oak, surrounding the device "S.G. 1633. S.C." The uprights of the back originally finished with small turned vases, similar ornaments of smaller size being fixed to the top rail immediately above each of the five spindles, but these have all disappeared. The panel of the back is inlaid with the five-diamond device (see Fig. 221), in lime and bog oak. The chair has been upholstered on seat and arms at a later date, which may account for the arm-terminal scrolls being cut off.

It is difficult to imagine how the ends of arms could be broken off, fashioned, as they are, from the long-grain of the timber. Even if the scrolling were to break across the short-grain, the actual arm-length would not be affected. Fig. 233 has suffered in the same way, and its three finials on the uprights and the centre of the cresting are missing. The panel of the back is unusually choice for a chair of this class; carved with a conventional rendering of the carnation, the dahlia, the Tudor rose and the acorn, all on the one central stem. Some family significance may attach to this choice, but, without indication, it is obscure.

Fig. 238.
OAK CHAIR.
c. 1660. St. Albans Abbey.

One of the fine chairs from the Lady Chapel of St. Albans Abbey is shown in Fig. 234, which, at first glance, bears a resemblance to the one shown with it on the same page, Fig. 235. Both have the heavy horizontal top rail to the back, projecting over two carved brackets on the sides of the back uprights. The design of the arm is the same in each. There are points of difference, however, which may be pointed out with advantage. Both chairs have lost their original cresting; had this been present, the casual resemblance between the two would not have been so marked. The first has the type of key-cornered framing of the back, which was borrowed from the Low Countries about

1650–60, and was rarely used other than by East Anglian designers. To complete the pattern of this back, one must imagine a central panel of upright rectangular form framed with a chamfered moulding or field. The front legs are turned in the form of columns, well cut in at the necks and bases. The carving motif of the seat and back rails is purely geometrical in inspiration. The cushion-moulding of the top rail of the back is not the original form, but the carved members above and below it belong to the chair.

There is one detail which many of the chairs of this date exhibit in common—the gouge cuts, or "fingering," which is a relic of the Gothic period. It will be noticed in the hickory chair, Fig. 232, in the arches and pilasters of Fig. 233, in the cutting of the conventional leaf on the back uprights above the junction of the arm in the chair which we are considering, and, in the next example, in the lower rail and the framing of the back. A study of this chair, Fig. 235, and also the previous one, will show that the former methods of construction, without the necessity for adhesives, had departed. The mouldings of the back—two sections of which are missing—have been secured with nails and glue. This is a finely-designed and well-made chair in every other respect, as although the top rail has been tenoned on the uprights of the back, instead of between them, the wood is too stout and solid for this method to be a source of much weakness in the chair. There is a good deal of classical influence present, and with its original cresting

Fig. 239.
OAK CHAIR.
Dated 1682.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

—in the form of a cornice of ogee and fillet, probably—this may have been even more marked. Attention may be directed to the top rail with dentil course, and the vertically fluted frieze, with the fillets separated with the parting tool and the punch. These suggest a Middlesex or Hertfordshire origin for the chair. Its date is about the middle of the seventeenth century.

The chair in Chelsworth Church, in Suffolk, here shown in Fig. 236, has its original cushion-moulded top rail to the back, but with a cresting which is certainly of later date. There is the same shape of arm as in many of the preceding examples, cut out, probably,

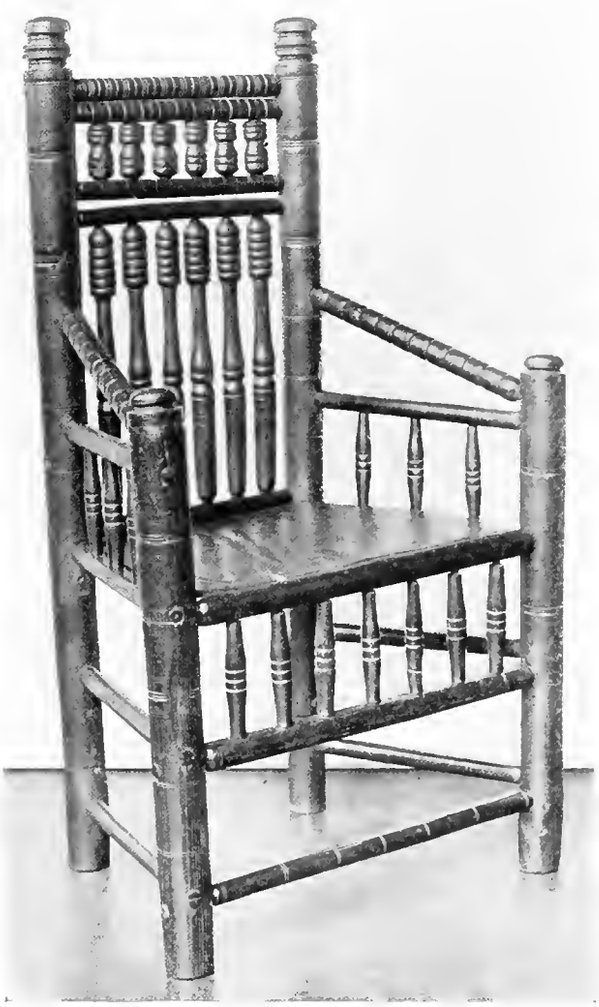


Fig. 240.
CHAIR OF ASH, ELM AND FRUIT-WOOD.
Mid-seventeenth century.

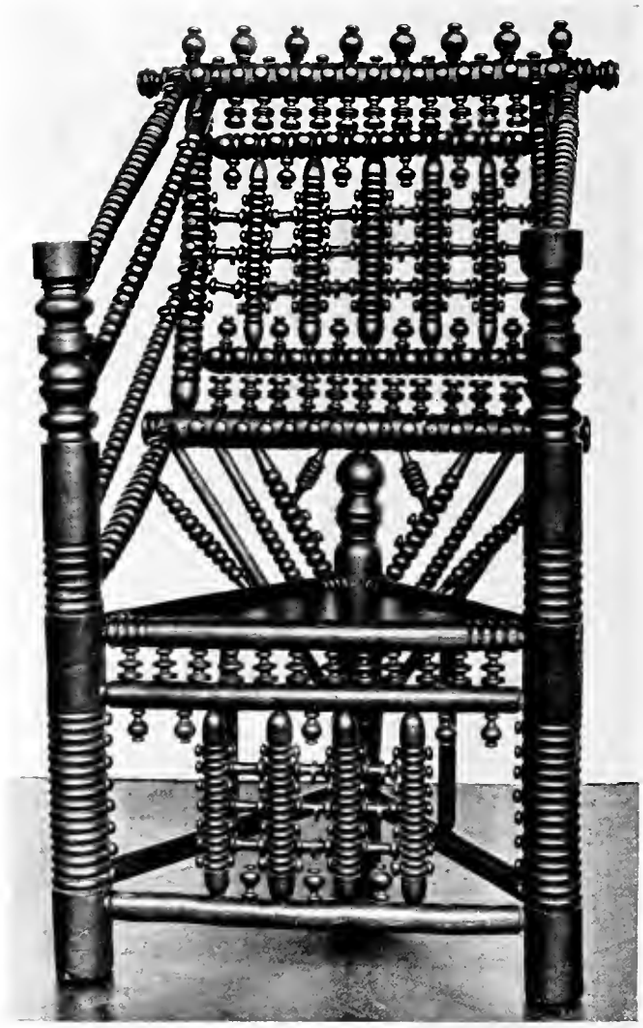


Fig. 241.
CHAIR OF APPLE AND YEW.
Mid-seventeenth century.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

so that the sitter could grasp it easily, and, half rising to a standing posture, draw the chair close to a table. The leg and baluster turning is of the same pattern as in Fig. 234.

Fig. 237, of somewhat earlier date and of Lancashire origin, originally came from Hessop Hall, Derbyshire, the former seat of the Earl of Newburgh, whose earldom could hardly have been created at the date when it was made. A comparison of this chair with some of the examples already illustrated will show the similarity in type of this flat-modelled character of carving. The bobbin-turning of the arm supports here indicates the period of the Commonwealth.

Another of the chairs in the Lady Chapel of St. Albans Abbey is shown in Fig. 238. Of similar character to Fig. 235, the back is closely framed, without surrounding mouldings, and with very little recessing of the panel. It has the overhanging top rail with brackets to the back uprights in the manner of its time.

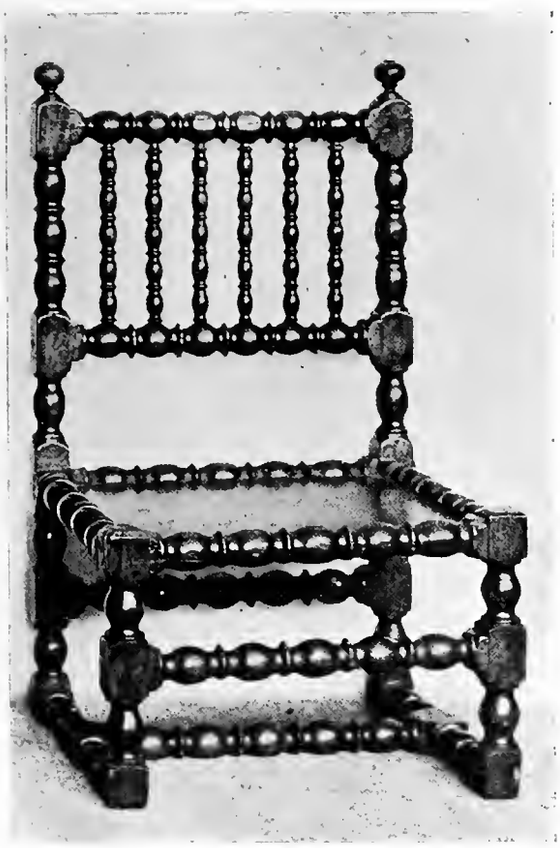


Fig. 242.

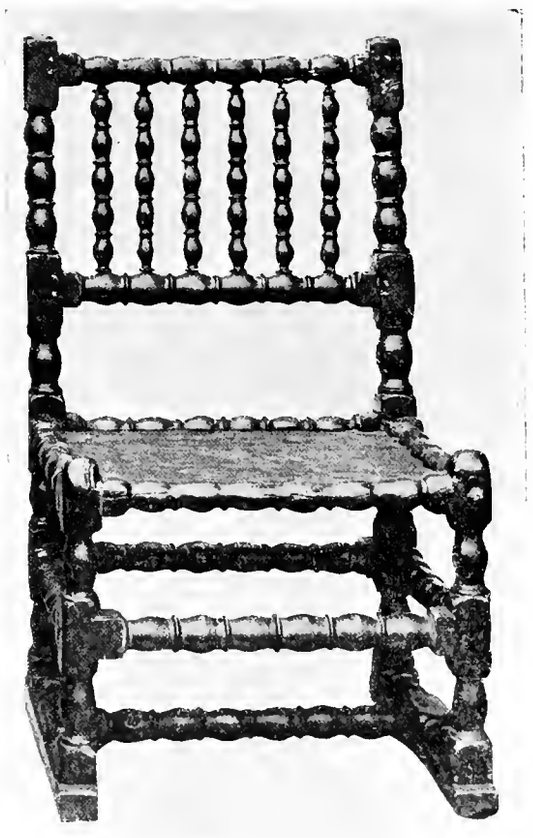


Fig. 243.

FRUIT-WOOD BOBBIN-TURNED CHAIRS.

Early seventeenth century. W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

An interesting chair from Thorpe Arch Hall, Yorks, dated 1682, is shown in Fig. 239. This is a recent Museum acquisition. The date is, of course, the period of the Restoration walnut chairs, and oak overlaps with walnut towards the end of the reign of Charles II. Although carved in oak, the cresting rail of the back possesses the walnut details of this time, as exemplified in the richly carved and pierced stretchers which are to be found tenoned between the middle squares of the twist-turned legs of the Restoration walnut chairs. Examples of these will be illustrated in a later chapter. This model represents the last phase of the English oak chair.

We have now to retrogress and take up another channel of development in the history of our subject. Mention has already been made of the so-called "tourneyed" chairs of the period of Henry VIII, which were referred to as novelties and objects of great value in inventories of the time. None of these chairs of original date appear to have survived, and an examination of the two later copies shown in Figs. 240 and 241, will show their fragile character. Here we have the art of the wood-turner running riot, especially in Fig. 241. This chair consists of a multitude of bobbin-forms, each piece socketed into another. The woods are apple-tree and yew, both chosen for their toughness. In Fig. 240 ash, elm and either apple or almond tree are used.

Fig. 244.
OAK CHAIR.
Height, 3 ft. 3 ins.; width, 2 ft.; depth, 1 ft. 9 ins.
Date about 1645–50.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

This type of turned chair appears at several periods, and for reasons which may be conjectured. It is, obviously, a conceit of the wood-turner, produced without the aid of the joiner or his tools. Constructionally, these chairs are absurdities, and, in design, they leave a good deal to be desired. Thus the seat

of Fig. 241 is triangular on plan, so that the chair could be placed in a corner, but the back is parallel to the line of the front seat, so that the attempt is abortive. All the stresses, in both chairs, bear directly on the joints, which have to depend, for stability, on glue or other adhesive. Fig. 240 is somewhat more logical, and the genesis of the modern Windsor chair of the stick-back type can be traced in this model. There is no method here, however, of bracing the front legs firmly to the back. Any forward strain on the ends of the front legs, on the part of the sitter, would force the cross-rails of the arms out of their sockets.

This revival of turning coincides with the beginning of the Commonwealth period. The Puritan disdained ornament, and as an iconoclast he had few equals in English history. The fine woodwork of the fifteenth century, especially that in churches, suffered more at Roundhead hands than at any other period, the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI not excepted. It is doubtful how far from London this wave of Puritanism extended. Carving on chairs or other furniture, of home-county origin, is rare during the years from 1645 to 1660, yet the same cannot be said of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Westmorland, Cumberland or Durham. That this neglect of ornament was only a pose, there can be little doubt, viewed after the lapse of two centuries and a half, when events and tendencies can be appreciated in proper perspective. Commonwealth silver is the rarest of all from the reign of Elizabeth onwards; the Puritan inclined to pewter. That did not prevent him, nevertheless, from seizing, and melting down as much of the earlier silver as he could lay

Fig. 245.
OAK CHAIR.
Dated 1640.

his hands upon. It is a curious reflection, but one which is substantiated by historical evidence, that an age of religious zeal always discounts artistic production, whereas an era of vice and extravagance encourages it. The Commonwealth in England, and the middle eighteenth century in France can be selected, at haphazard, from many historical examples of the two influences.

The bobbin-turned chairs, such as Figs. 242 and 243 are, essentially, of Commonwealth type. The lavish use of turning was, evidently, the Laodicean attitude of the Puritan towards ornament. These chairs possess what may be described as a busy severity, but they are well constructed, top rails tenoned between uprights and the legs heavily stretchered. The sunk seats presuppose the use of a squab-cushion. It is a characteristic of Commonwealth chairs that, if made in pairs, the two are rarely of the same height. It was not because, if intended

Fig. 246.
OAK CHAIR.
Height, 3 ft. 5 ins.; width, 1 ft. 10 ins.
Date about 1650.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 247.
OAK CHAIR.
3 ft. 4½ ins. high by 1 ft. 7½ ins. across seat,
1 ft. 4 ins. deep.
J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

for male and female use, the lady would demand a chair of lesser seat height, but the fact that this slight indication of relative importance epitomised the Puritan attitude towards their womenfolk. If man was created first, the Roundhead did not intend the fact to be forgotten.

Of the two chairs illustrated here, one is considerably less in seat height than the other, and this is intentional. The two may be an original pair, in which case, Fig. 242 is the chair of the lady, Fig. 243 that of the man; here, as a revolt against Commonwealth traditions, illustrated last.

Fig. 248.
Date about 1660.

OAK ARM-CHAIRS.

Fig. 249.
Date about 1665.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 250.

OAK CHAIR.

The Sussex type.

Date about 1670.

St. Alban's Abbey.

Fig. 251.

OAK CHAIR.

The Wilts and Somerset type.

Date about 1660.

St. Alban's Abbey.

Fig. 252.

OAK CHAIR.

The Hertfordshire type.

Date about 1660.

Messrs. Gregory and Co.

If upholstery was rare before 1645, it was still more so during the regime of Cromwell. By the term is meant, not the covering of a seat or back with a leather or fabric, but the padding of the seat itself with horse-hair, tow or similar material. The simple Cromwellian chair, of which Fig. 244 is a good example, usually has a seat and back made by straining a thick hide over the framings, without any attempt at padding. It is also worthy of note that the arm-chair of the seventeenth century was usually made for female use; the wearing of a sword, which was not usually left in the ante-room, according to the polite custom of the next century, precluding their use by men. Thus Fig. 245 is a man's chair, the back low, to rest the arm upon when the more comfortable sideways position was adopted. This chair has a covering of coarse woolwork applied over the original leather. It serves to illustrate the use of spiral-turning prior to the Restoration, and in an oak chair.

Two more of these oak Commonwealth chairs, with seats and backs of thick cowhide, are shown in Figs. 246 and 247. They show the usual type of chair of their period.

The two child's chairs, Figs. 248 and 249, just bridge the Restoration period. The

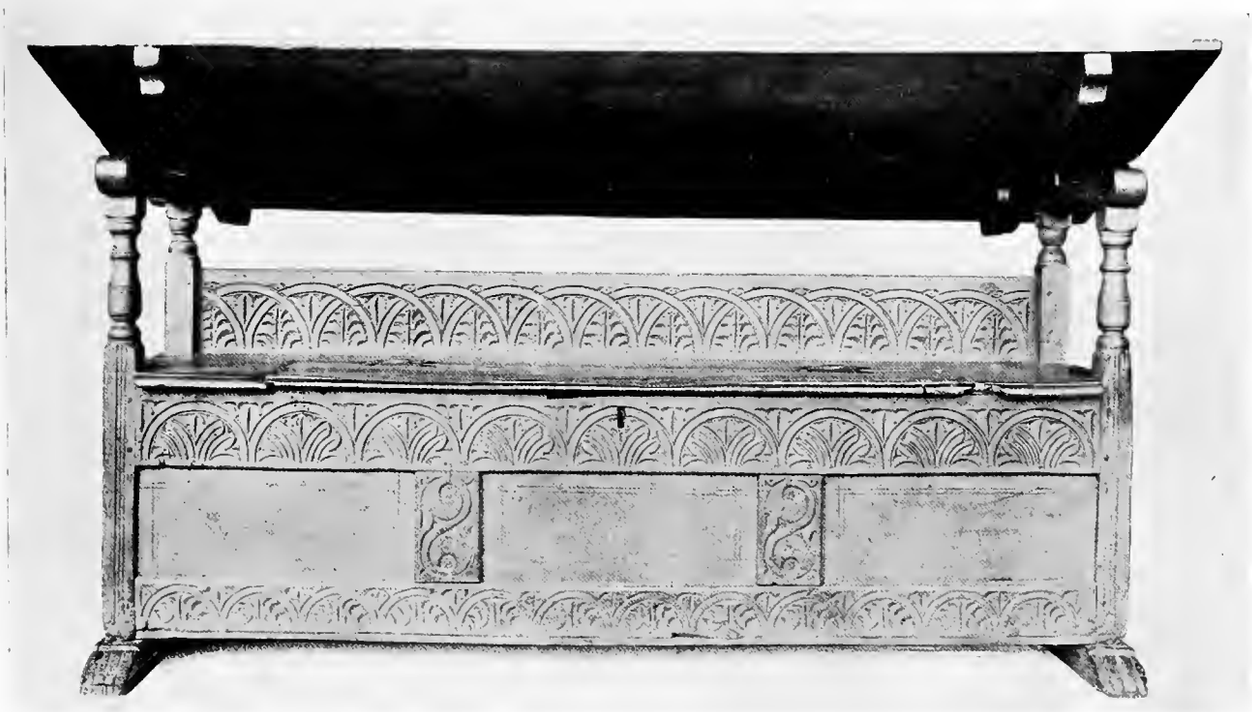


Fig. 253.
OAK SETTLE TABLE.
Date about 1650. Victoria and Albert Museum.

bobbin-turning still persists in the first, with stretcher-rail on the ground in the Commonwealth manner. In the second an extensive use is made of the interlacing guilloche. If the evidence of pulpits can be relied upon, this is a Lancashire chair.

Fig. 254.
OAK CHAIR-TABLE.
Date about 1660–5. Victoria and Albert Museum.

In Figs. 250, 251 and 252, three chairs are illustrated, all of the first years of the Restoration, which may serve to explain the Sussex, the Wilts and Somersetshire, and the Hertfordshire types. In the latter must be included Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and part of Bedfordshire. Oxfordshire does not appear to have possessed a chair-type of its own at this date.

All three of the chairs, shown here, are high and narrow in the back, but this form became more general after 1660, and led the way for the tall slender chairs of the short reign of James II. The Sussex type, which includes western Kent and part of Hampshire, has a strongly-framed back, made to simulate panelling. The top rail is broad, but rarely with side-overhang. It is crested with a shaping cut from the solid wood of the rail itself. The upright styles of the back are narrow, and the arm is usually of greater breadth, sometimes cut over the panel moulding, but more often overhanging outside, and rounded off to make a neat junction with the back. The seat-board is cut in between the square of the legs, projecting very slightly or not at all. The rosetted

Fig. 255.
OAK SETTLE.
Date about 1670–5. Messrs. Robersons.

interlacing guilloche is a favourite detail in the coast towns of Sussex and Kent, but is not typical. The turned baluster in vase-form, as in this chair, is indicative of a post-Restoration date, and is more frequently found in Sussex and Home County pieces than in those from other localities.

The western chair, Fig. 251, is distinguished by over-elaboration of ornament, in very flat relief. A close examination of the lower panel, in the back of this chair, will show that nearly every inch of available space is covered with this flat decoration. The cresting is from the solid wood of the top rail and the uprights of the framing, the junctions at the bases of the end scrolls being contrived with some ingenuity.

In the Hertfordshire chair of this date, of which Fig. 252 is an example, the framing of the back is very massive, with broad top rail, and separate cresting pegged on. There is a peculiar chip character in the carving which can be seen in the illustration. The

Fig. 256.
OAK SETTLE.
Dated 1704. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

arcading of the back panel is not in relief but in intaglio, the entire design being cut into the solid wood with the gouge and parting tool. The general quality is crude, yet with a certain vigour which is typical of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Berkshire at this period. Other pronounced types from Yorkshire and Lancashire will be described and illustrated at a later stage. Some of the earlier examples have already been shown in the previous pages.

Various forms of the high-back settle appear in Commonwealth times. Economy, of space would no doubt dictate a combination of settle, table and chest, as in Fig. 253. A portion of the seat is hinged to give access to the chest below. The flat incising of the arcading has been scratched from centres, the tool used being probably a pair of

Fig. 257.
YEW AND FRUIT-WOOD CHAIR.
Dated 1640.

dividers, one point having a cutting edge. The general style of this piece suggests the North Riding of Yorkshire.

Fig. 254 shows the Commonwealth simplicity carried into the early Restoration years, the vase-shaped balusters suggesting this date. The top is constructed of six boards, fixed to the heavy runners. It was probably rectangular in form, originally, and was cut to its present circular shape at a considerably later date. The detail of the uniting of the front and back legs with turned rails, and the tieing with a turned stretcher from their centres, precludes this chair-table from being referred to a date prior to 1660, in spite of its Cromwellian simplicity.

The Lancashire settle is shown in Fig. 255. The distinguishing features are the "fielding," or chamfering of the back panels, the flat modelled character of the carving,

Fig. 258. Fig. 259. Fig. 260.

OAK CHAIRS.

Date about 1660. Victoria and Albert Museum.

the central leg, halved into its stretcher-rail below and into the seat apron above, and the arms cut from thin oak, little more than one inch in thickness. There is no central leg at the back. The framing has a small inlaid stringing of ebony and holly, herring-boned. The running guilloche pattern of the top rail of the back is ingeniously designed. The central panel, with its initials "A.W.," is original.

Fig. 256 is the Essex type of settle-chest with hinged seat, and is interesting as showing the persistence of the late seventeenth-century models. It is dated 1704, and there is no reason to suppose that this panel has been inserted at a later date. The carving "I (? J) C" and the date, has every appearance of being of the same age as the piece itself, and there are no indications, either at the front or the back, of the panel

Fig. 261.

Fig. 262.

OAK CHAIRS.

Height, 3 ft. 3 ins.; width, 1 ft. 7 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 4 ins. Date about 1660.

Height, 3 ft. 1 in.; width, 1 ft. 7 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 4 ins. H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

being added, nor of the surface being dubbed flat and re-carved. The panel is fixed in grooves in the framing, with the mouldings applied, but these only lie flat on the panel, and do not fix it in any way. This settle-chest must be regarded as showing the persistence of type, such as one finds in the instance of the thirty-hour, pull-up, long-case clocks which were made, in country districts,

Fig. 263.
OAK CHAIR.
Yorkshire Type.
Height, 3 ft. 1½ ins.; width, 1 ft. 7 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 4 ins.
Date about 1660.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

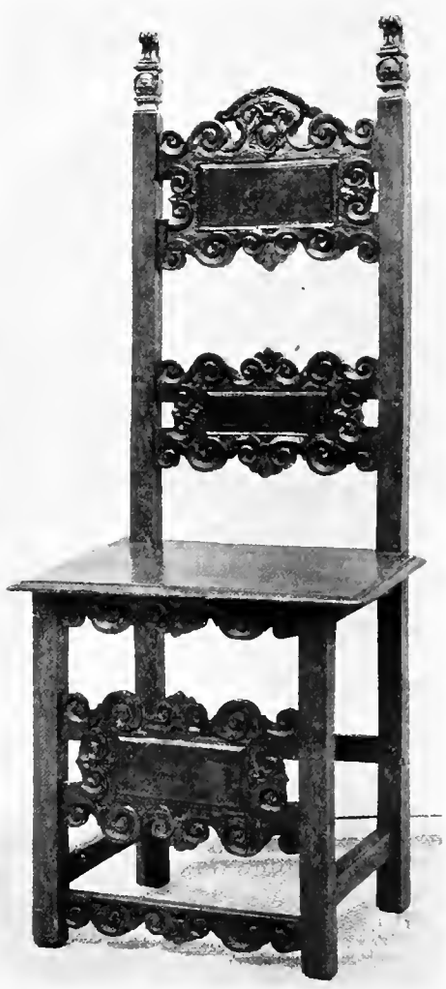


Fig. 264.
OAK CHAIR.
Yorkshire Type (rare).

upwards of a century after the fashion of the pull-up clock had been superseded, by the key winding from holes in the dial-face.

The circular-seated chair, Fig. 257, has every appearance of being of English make, but is, obviously, copied from the model of the Dutch "Burgomaster's" chair, examples of which are not unusual in Holland. It bears the date, 1640, which is very early for a piece of this kind made in England. There is no doubt that, with the

considerable Dutch settlement which took place in Norfolk and Suffolk during the latter half of the seventeenth century, not only were pieces from Holland imported, but also many were constructed, from English timber, by workmen from the Low Countries. It is exceptional to find caning in seats and back-panels as early as the reign of Charles I. These circular chairs are not unknown in England, but the greater number are so

Fig. 265.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1660.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 266.
OAK CHAIR.
Date about 1660–70.
Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

obviously of foreign handiwork, that they can be summarily dismissed as such. In some examples, however, woods, such as yew, pear, apple and almond are used, which indicate, almost beyond question, that they were made in this country. They are generally described as Welsh, but there is no evidence for such locality of origin. It is safer to assume that they are of East Anglian make, copied from the Dutch models

which, we know, were imported into Ipswich and Norwich. Whether this example is spuriously dated, or no, is open to question. Judging from its style, and its English origin, a date between 1670 and 1690 would be more probable. The actual figures are in the numeral characters of this period.

The Yorkshire chair of the later seventeenth century is unmistakable. It is also the first of the open-back type, when cross-railing between the back uprights is adopted instead of the earlier framing. These chairs are generally constructed from oak, with either turned pendants, as in Figs. 258 and 260, of bog oak or stained fruit-wood, or balusters of yew, cherry or pear, as in Fig. 259. Eight examples are shown here which illustrate the usual Yorkshire patterns. The pair of chairs, Figs. 261 and 262, are of identical pattern to Fig. 260, but have lost the turned pendants under the cross-rails of the back. They show also the slight difference in size between the two chairs of a pair

Fig. 267.

Fig. 268.

OAK CHAIRS.

Lancashire Type.

Height, 3 ft. 4 ins.; width, 1 ft. 7 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 3 ins. About 1670.

Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

Fig. 269.

OAK CHAIR.

Date about 1660.

Fig. 270.

OAK CHAIR.

Date about 1670.

Fig. 271.

OAK CHAIR.

Height, 3 ft. 7 ins.

Date about 1690.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 272.

Fig. 273.

OAK LANCASHIRE CHAIRS.

Mid-seventeenth century.

Fig. 274.

Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

which has already been referred to in this chapter. The seats are grooved into their rails, and sunk to hold a thin squab-cushion. Fig. 263 is unusual in having split balusters glued to the faces of the back legs above the seat. The projection of the top squares of the front legs, finished in turned buttons, is a detail general in walnut Restoration chairs, but unusual in those of Yorkshire origin in oak. Fig. 264 is much the rarest type of chair of this district, in character

Fig. 275.
OAK CHAIR.
South-Western Type.
Height of chair, 3 ft.; height to seat, 16 ins.
Date about 1665.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 276.
WALNUT CHILD'S CHAIR.
2 ft. 10 ins. high, floor to top of back.
1 ft. 7½ ins. wide across front of seat.
1 ft. 5 ins. depth of seat.
Date about 1665–70.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

strongly resembling the early sixteenth-century examples of Northern France, from whence this model was probably inspired. This chair is in walnut, which still further emphasises its foreign appearance. Fig. 265 is of the usual kind, another version of Fig. 260, exceptional only in its bobbin-turning.

The Lancashire small chair of the same period is also unmistakable. The back is framed, with a cresting to the top rail between the uprights, and

Fig. 277.
CHERRY WOOD STOOL.
c. 1630.

Fig. 278.
OAK STOOL.
Height, 15 ins.; width, 15 ins.; depth, 9½ ins.
c. 1640.

Fig. 279.
OAK STOOL.
Height, 21 ins.; width, 18 ins.; depth, 11 ins.
c. 1630.

Fig. 280.
ELM STOOL.
Height, 20 ins.; width, 18½ ins.; depth, 13½ ins.
c. 1680.

Fig. 281.
OAK STOOL (EAST ANGLIAN).
c. 1660.

Fig. 282.
OAK STOOL.
Height, 21 ins.; width, 18 ins.; depth, 10 ins.
c. 1630.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

the back frame is filled with a solid panel, either chamfered and left plain, or carved. The character of this Lancashire carving can be illustrated much more easily than it can be described. Nine examples of these Lancashire chairs are given in Figs. 266 to 274. With the exception of Figs. 267, 268 and 273, all have the wide opening between the seat and the lower rail of the back, which characterises the Lancashire chair of this period. Fig. 275 is the south-western county example of the same early Restoration date. The front legs are turned in a sturdy manner, with as little waste of wood as possible, and the under-framing is still square-sectioned. The back is solidly panelled, with the lower rail finishing on the seat level. The carving is simple, merely a succession of single gouge-cuts, in character almost like chip-carving.

Fig. 276 is a child's chair possessing both the oak and the walnut characteristics, in the bobbin-turning below the seat and the slide-rest-twisting above it. This example may be said to bridge the oak and the walnut periods, if the term can be used of two manners, which, at the end of the one and the beginning of the other, over-lapped by a period of nearly twenty years, and with it, we return again to the point arrived at in Fig. 239.

Of the seventeenth-century stools there is little to be said. They were made in considerable numbers, and were, in fact, the seats of their period, having the same

Fig. 283.
OAK STOOL.
c. 1630.

Fig. 284.
OAK BOX STOOL.
Height, 14 ins.; width, 17 ins.; depth, 13 ins.
c. 1640.

Fig. 285.
OAK STOOL.
c. 1630.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 286.

PINE STOOL TABLE.

Height, 21 ins.; width, 23 ins.; depth, 18 ins.

c. 1660–70.

Fig. 287.

OAK STOOL.

c. 1620.

H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

Fig. 288.

c. 1630.

Fig. 289.

c. 1630.

Bond's Hospital, Coventry.

OAK STOOLS.

Fig. 290.
OAK STOOL.
Western Type.
c. 1660–70.

Fig. 291.
OAK STOOL.
Western Type.
c. 1630.

Fig. 292.
OAK STOOL.
c. 1640–50.
H. Clifford Smith, Esq.

importance which chairs possessed in the next century. One of the great distinctions between the furniture of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries is that in the former the stool was general and the chair exceptional, whereas in the latter, the reverse is the case. The eighteenth-century stool is always in the nature of a supernumerary piece of furniture.

Fig. 293.
OAK STOOL.
Midland Type.
c. 1640.
W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

These oak stools have been variously described as "joint-stools," and even, lugubriously, as "coffin-stools." They were, really, the guest-seats at table, and in many cases they were exactly proportioned so as to fit between the framing and the stretcher-rail of tables, and were evidently intended to be so stacked away when not in use. Low stools, for the use of children, were also made in numbers, sometimes fitted with a box below the seat as in Fig. 284. These low stools sometimes had the centre of the top cut out with a hand-hole, so that they could be readily lifted and carried from place to place.

The stools shown in these pages have not been

arranged in chronological order, and only approximate dates, namely, those of the inception of turned leg fashions, can be ventured.

The one drawback to the arranging of English furniture into types such as chairs, tables, chests, and the like, is that pieces which bridge these categories are difficult to include. Thus Fig. 286 here is really a stool-table, and we have already had examples of table-chairs in this chapter.

Two interesting examples of cupboard stools are given here in Figs. 294 and 295 as a conclusion to this chapter. Their periods are uncertain, but the first is not later than the close of the sixteenth century (and even then, is copied from a still earlier type), while the second dates from the last quarter of the seventeenth. Both are instructive in showing these bridge-pieces which were made during a space of over a

Fig. 294.

Late sixteenth century.

OAK CUPBOARD STOOLS.

Fig. 295.

Late seventeenth century.

W. Smedley Aston, Esq.

century, in numbers too small to establish any fashion. Pieces of exceptional character are always difficult to date, for this reason. Made for special purposes, sporadically, they follow no established mode of the time, and are nearly as likely to create a new manner as to copy one long disused.

The development of the English oak chair has now been taken past the period when walnut superseded oak, in a great measure, as the fashionable wood for furniture. Actually, to follow a chronological order, walnut chairs of Restoration type should have been inserted in this procession of oak examples. Fig. 239, for example, as we have seen, is late, and carries us well into the walnut years. In practice, however, this would have rendered the whole scheme of this chapter incoherent. Even to have illustrated the oak chairs, shown here, in the progression of their date, instead of in a manner to enable similar and dissimilar types to be compared or contrasted, would have resulted in an orderly arrangement of chapter, but at the cost of a sacrifice of clearness of explanation. English chairs develop not from one, but from many sources, and proceed on widely divergent lines. For this reason, chairs are much more heterogenous in character and in evolution than is the case with other pieces of English furniture, and this is true, not only of the seventeenth, but the eighteenth century as well.

Chapter IV.

Walnut Chairs from 1660 to 1700.

THE practice of lathe-turning columns or balusters is of ancient origin in England, as we have seen in earlier chapters. It has also been pointed out that turning was little used in Gothic woodwork, in its prime, and that the square, or diamond-sectioned and moulded baluster or mullion was employed, in preference, in chancel and other screens. It is revived, as a novelty, during the reign of Henry VIII and in the seventeenth century becomes the usual method of fashioning legs of chairs and tables or the baluster of cupboards. It is also used, with considerable effect, in the decoration of flat pilasters, in the fashion known as the "split-baluster," or the boss, generically termed "strap-and-jewel" work.

It was inevitable that the lathe, once used as a general thing, would be improved upon and that new methods, such as the slide-rest for spiral turning, would be devised. In the chairs of the later seventeenth century, turning plays a very important part, as it is the fashions of the legs rather than of the carving which indicate a definite period, often within a margin as narrow as a single decade. The slide-rest itself is an ingenious but very simple tool which may be described here for the benefit of the uninitiated. If a plain turned baluster (an ordinary desk ruler may serve) be centred in a lathe and allowed to revolve, a lead pencil held rigidly in the one position will make a ring round the ruler as it turns. If, however, the pencil be moved laterally, say, from left to right, the line which it makes will spiral round the ruler from one end to the other. Moved slowly, the spiralling will be very close, but it will expand the faster the pencil be moved. Let us replace the pencil, which merely marks, by a gouge or chisel which cuts, and a twist will be produced, more or less regular, according to the even character of the lateral movement. Substitute for the chisel held with the free hand a cutting tool in a slide-rest, the lateral travel of which can be accurately proportioned to the chuck-revolution of the lathe, and it will be seen that every variety of twisting, either in long or short spirals, can be produced with ease and certainty.

That twist-turning on the lathe does not appear as a fully-developed art we have seen in a previous chapter. Numbers of chairs and small tables were made, even as late as the first years of the Restoration, with bobbin-turned legs, and these must be

regarded as the prototypes of the later lathe-twist. Figs. 296 and 297, from Lyme Park, may be cited here as typical examples of this bobbin turning. Both stool and chair are in beech, stained black, and while the former has been made with a caned-seat to hold a squab cushion, the latter has been expressly devised for fixed upholstery. Both may be regarded as the last phase of the Cromwellian manner. The true Restoration chair, which is nearly always in walnut, is characteristic and unmistakable. Figs. 298 and 299 illustrate the features of this style, which persists from 1600 to about 1680–5, as a fashion, although copies were made at a later date. It is rare, however, in the case of the latter, to find the Restoration details without any intrusion of later features, which will be described at a subsequent stage. Although the details of the pure Restoration chair can be studied in these two illustrations, it may be as well to point them out, and to emphasise them here, in order that any innovations can be easily remarked in later examples after about 1680.

These two chairs have framed backs, with the cresting fixed between the squares of the outer balusters, instead of being dowelled on them in the later manner. The back forms one complete frame with carved styles and rails, sometimes pierced through, as in Fig. 298, more rarely cut in the solid, as in Fig. 299. Perhaps because of the general satisfaction at the revival of the monarchy in England, a favourite motif in these chairs is the royal crown, flanked by amorini. This may be remarked in the cresting of Fig. 298, but it is not rare to find the crown introduced in the upright styles of the back framing, and the stretcher uniting the front legs. So general was the use of this device, that Fig. 299 is rare from the absence of its use anywhere on the chair.

The legs, both at front and back, are spiral-turned, with squares carved, on the fronts only, with pateræ. The arms have a long graceful sweep, scrolling over at their

Fig. 296.
BEECH CHAIR.
c. 1660.
Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

ends. The stretcher railing uniting all four legs is of the H pattern, all double twist-turned, and Fig. 299 has an additional rail between the back legs below the seat framing. The filling of the back and seat panels of these chairs is always a meshing of fine split cane ; any upholstery, as in the two examples here, is nearly, if not always, of subsequent date.

Although apparently confined within narrow limits, this Restoration style of walnut chair, permitted of considerable variety, in details, although not in general appearance. There is, at the same time, a wide diversity in quality, from the extremely rich and finely carved to the positively crude. It is usual, but by no means a justifiable procedure, to dub all these crude chairs as provincial in make, but it is curious to note that where an actual maker can be singled out, either by a label on the chair itself (rare but not unknown) or by the means of an inventory or account, it is the village maker who is often responsible for the richest and best executed specimens.

One of these crude (one might almost say cheap) Restoration chairs is shown in Fig. 300, showing, however, the original state of the seat and back panels and the use of the crown on the back cresting and the front stretcher. The projection of the front legs above the framing of the seat was a device to hold a flat squab cushion in position.

Fig. 297.
BEECH STOOL.
c. 1660. Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

There is every reason to believe that flat cushions, usually covered with velvet, were made for these chairs originally, as the proper finish to the seat.

Fig. 301 is the aristocratic type of the same model, one of four from Cassiobury Park, probably original to the house and made prior to the appointment of the Earl of Essex as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The upholstery of the seats is a later addition, a replacement of worn caning, but these chairs, otherwise, are in their original condition and of fine quality. They are typical of the first ten years of the Restoration and show the kind of furniture which was made for the large houses at this date.

It would be useless here to illustrate a procession of these walnut Charles II chairs,

Fig. 298.

3 ft. 10½ ins. floor to top of back.
2 ft. 0½ ins. across front of seat.

Fig. 299.

3 ft. 10 ins. floor to top of back.
2 ft. across front of seat.

WALNUT CHAIRS.

Date about 1660–5.

The Marquis of Townshend.

as they differ, as a rule, very little in form or detail, although varying considerably in quality, but such variation is often not apparent in a small illustration. It is more instructive, however, to show the departures from the type which were then introduced from the Continent, Holland, Flanders, Portugal and Spain.

The two rich chairs, Figs. 302 and 303, from Belton House, show these foreign details in a very striking manner. Chief of these is the Flemish curve, which, when used for the shaping of front

Fig. 300.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1665.

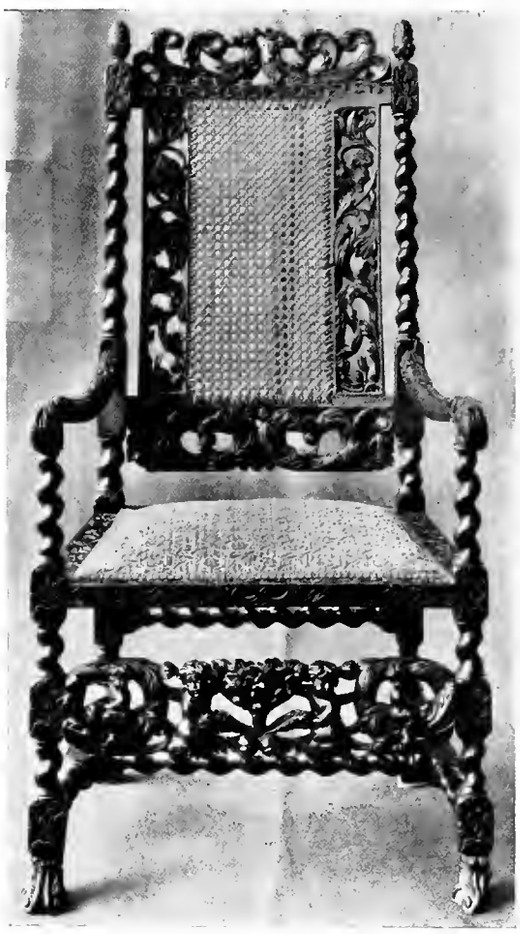


Fig. 301.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
c. 1670. The Earl of Essex.

legs, rapidly evolves into the cabriole form. This can be noticed in the arm balusters and the front legs of both of these chairs, and in the stretcher-rail of Fig. 303 it is still further emphasised. These later chairs, although still of Charles II period, were frequently made for upholstery on the seat and in the back panel, instead of the former caning, although the latter does not lose its popularity until almost the end of the seventeenth century. It is with the years following 1680 that we enter what may be described

as the era of gorgeous fabrics, and one event in France, partly religious and partly political, must be noted here, as it has an important bearing on the later development of English furniture. This is the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the persecution of the Huguenots which immediately followed.

It was Henry of Navarre who, on the 13th of April, 1590, granted permission to the Protestants of France to worship openly, wherever Protestant communities existed, to establish churches, except in Paris and its environs, to maintain colleges and universities, and to enjoy complete religious liberty. Although threatened and oppressed by Richelieu, and in turn by Mazarin and Colbert, it remained for Louis XIV to revoke the edict, under the influence of a corrupt and hypocritical penitence, on 18th October, 1685. Although actually accomplished at that date, the storm, had threatened for some five or six years before, and many had fled from France to avoid the persecution which they

Fig. 302.

Fig. 303.

WALNUT ARM-CHAIRS.

Date about 1670–80. Earl Brownlow.

had seen to be imminent. It was not the aristocracy who thus forsook their country, but the artisan and peasant classes, and it is to these émigres that England owed its knowledge and skill in the weaving of silks and velvets, and South Africa some of its finest families of settlers, men whose descendants fought against England, and successfully, at Majuba, some two centuries later. We do not know these Huguenots by name, in connection with silk-weaving, although they established a colony in Spitalfields which remained famous for many years, but on the dials of long-case and bracket clocks such names as Nieue, Du Chesne, De Charmes, Massy, and de la Fontaine perpetuate this persecution of the French Protestants of 1685–90.

Apart from the mere use of these elaborate silks and velvets, their influence in the development of form in chair-designing was immediate and immense. They overpowered the simple pattern of the earlier Restoration years, and designs were altered

Fig. 304.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 305.

Bond's Hospital, Coventry.

WALNUT ARM-CHAIRS.

Date about 1670–80.

and enriched to accord with them. These two chairs from Belton, especially Fig. 302, show this ornate character in unmistakable fashion. Here we have the amorini not only in the back cresting and front stretcher, but also as terminals to the balusters of the back and as ornamental details on the front legs. Of these elaborate chairs, examples exist in many noted houses, as at Glemham Hall, for example, which show that the fashion must have been very widespread. Fig. 303 is quieter in taste, and of pronounced Flemish design, the balusters of the back twisted in the earlier manner from which Fig. 301 had departed.

Fig. 306.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1685.

Fig. 307.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1680–5.
Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

Fig. 304 is of about the same period as the two chairs from Belton, and shows the somewhat rare conceit, of carving representations of couchant lions on the ends of the scrolled arms. In the cresting to the back are the figures of four boys, the two in the centre supporting a crown, resting on a female head. The same pattern, almost identical in detail, is repeated below in the stretcher uniting the front legs. The framing

Fig. 308.

OAK AND WALNUT DAY-BED.

5 ft. 10¾ ins. long by 2 ft. 10 ins., floor to top of back, by 1 ft. 10 ins. depth of seat.

Date about 1660. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 309.

WALNUT DAY-BED.

Date about 1670–80. Messrs. Robersons.

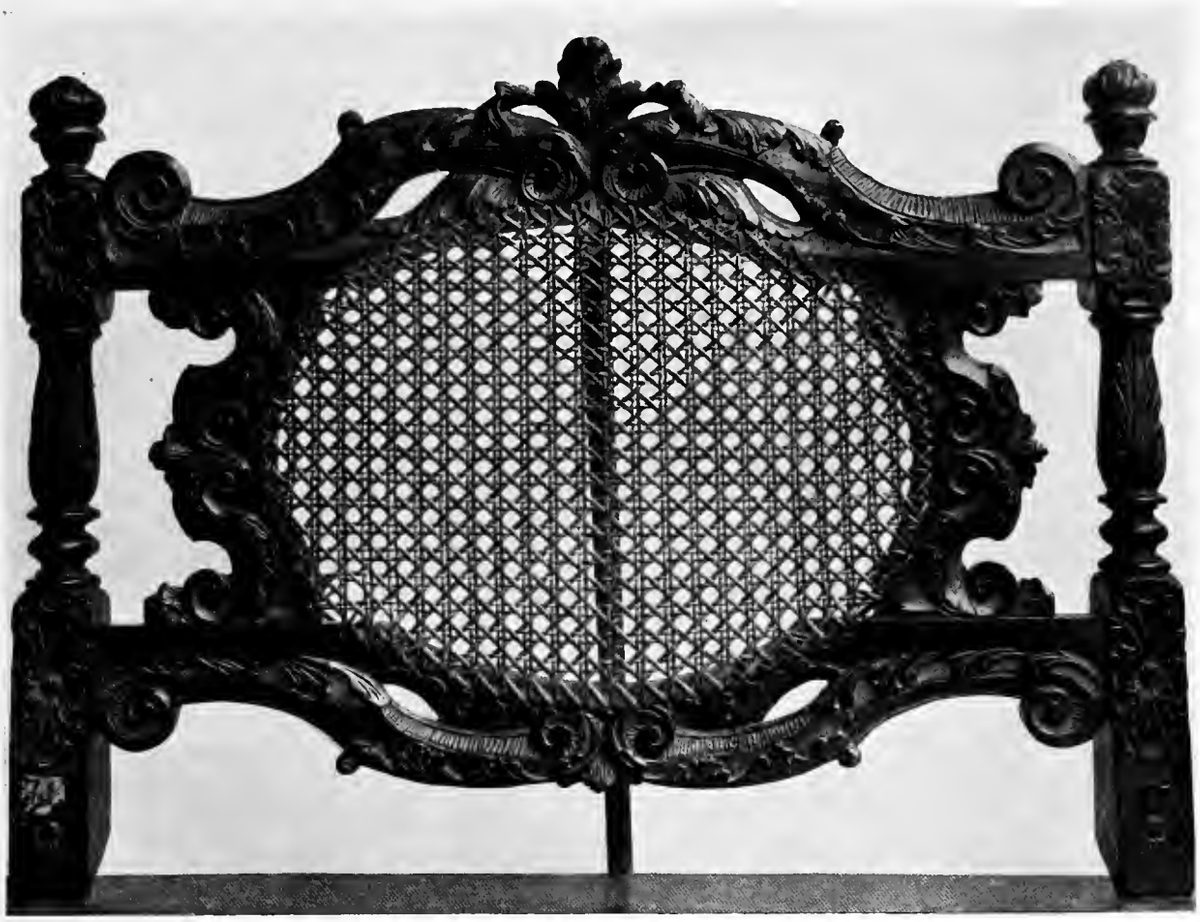


Fig. 310.
THE BACK OF THE DAY-BED, FIG. 309.

of the back is richly carved with bunches of grapes, vine tendrils and imbricated baskets, the figures of boys being introduced into the composition with a charming and novel effect. The front legs have the Flemish curve, but the somewhat older double twist is used for the back legs and the stretcher-railing. This is an ornate and well-designed chair of the full Restoration type. Fig. 305, from Bond's Hospital at Coventry, has the typical Restoration back and front stretcher, in conjunction with the Flemish front legs and arm balusters harmonising with the scrolled arm. Fig. 306 is of the same general form, but the double C-scroll of Flanders is introduced both in the back and on the front stretcher. The chair in Bond's Hospital has the caned back panel, but divided by a central muntin, which prepares the way for the three flat balusters in that of Fig. 306. In the latter the prototype of the cabriole leg can be seen in an unmistakable manner. Fig. 307, although possessing many of the older features, such as the twisted

legs and stretcher railing, has three vertical carved splats in the back, where an ingenious use is made of the Flemish C-scroll. The point-twist turning, also, is of unusual type in this chair. The upholstery of the seat is a later addition. It can be remarked, in this example, how backs of chairs become taller in the last years of Charles II, but that this example is not later than 1685 is suggested by the fact that the back cresting is still tenoned between the squares of the balusters, instead of being dowelled on them in the manner of the next reign.

An innovation of the Restoration years was the day-bed, or chair with seat elongated to form a couch, a piece copied from the French chaise-longue. Whether these walnut day-beds were ever really practical pieces of furniture is doubtful; they appear to possess about as much constructional strength as real comfort, and without thickly

Fig. 311.

WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.

A typical example combining the constructional details of the Restoration period with Flemish details.

1680–5. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 312.

WALNUT CHAIR.

The Restoration back combined with the James II construction of front legs and seat. 1665–80.

Fig. 313.

Fig. 314.

WALNUT SINGLE AND ARM-CHAIR.

1680–5.

Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

padded cushions on seat and back, could hardly have been used at all for the purpose which their name implies. They are rare pieces, at the present day, but this scarcity may be due to one or two causes, or possibly to both. They could not have been made in the same numbers as the chairs which they copy, for reasons which are obvious, and the constructional defects inherent in a couch designed in this manner must have been responsible for frequent breakages

Fig. 315.
WALNUT CHAIR.
The tall back which is typical of the period 1685–9.

Fig. 316.
WALNUT CHAIR.
A type which bridges the Jacobean and Orange period. *c.* 1690.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

and, in many instances, for their destruction as worthless pieces of furniture, especially during that dark period of the nineteenth century, when anything in the way of furniture possessing grace in line or detail appears to have been anathema to the designer.

Of these Restoration day-beds, those

which copy the earlier chair models, such as Fig. 308, where twist turning is employed for the legs and balusters of the back (and which, presumably, are prior to those where the Flemish motives are introduced), are rarely of fine quality. The necessary suppression

Fig. 318.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
With turning of Portugnese influence and flattened "bun" feet.
1690–5. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 317.
WALNUT CHAIR.
The earlier logical construction persisting to a later date.
c. 1690.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

of constructional knowledge, at the dictates of an absurd fashion, which the contortion of the back of this example must have demanded, probably militated largely against the chair-maker taking a sympathetic interest in such productions.

Figs. 309 and 310 show an interesting example of these day-beds—rare also by reason of its great depth of seat and width of back, measuring nearly three feet across,—which was recently bought from Gwydir Castle, that nobleman's seat so charmingly situated on the banks of the Conway river. Although actually a Restoration piece, it possesses few of the really typical details of the Charles II period, other than in the logical framing of the back. That the Flemish curve is a novel motive of this date is suggested by its use everywhere, on legs, stretchers, and back framings. Although not of the finest quality, the general design, especially that of the back, is good in line and proportion. The difficulty of the abruptly-sloping back, without adequate support, has here been shirked by fitting it, at the base, with metal pegs, which are socketed into the seat framing,—an evident confession of failure.

Mention has already been made of the difference, in the construction of chair backs, between tenoning the cresting rail between the side balusters, and dowelling it on. The former is as good as the latter method is bad. The chairs of the short reign of James II differ from those of the Charles II period in this constructional detail, more

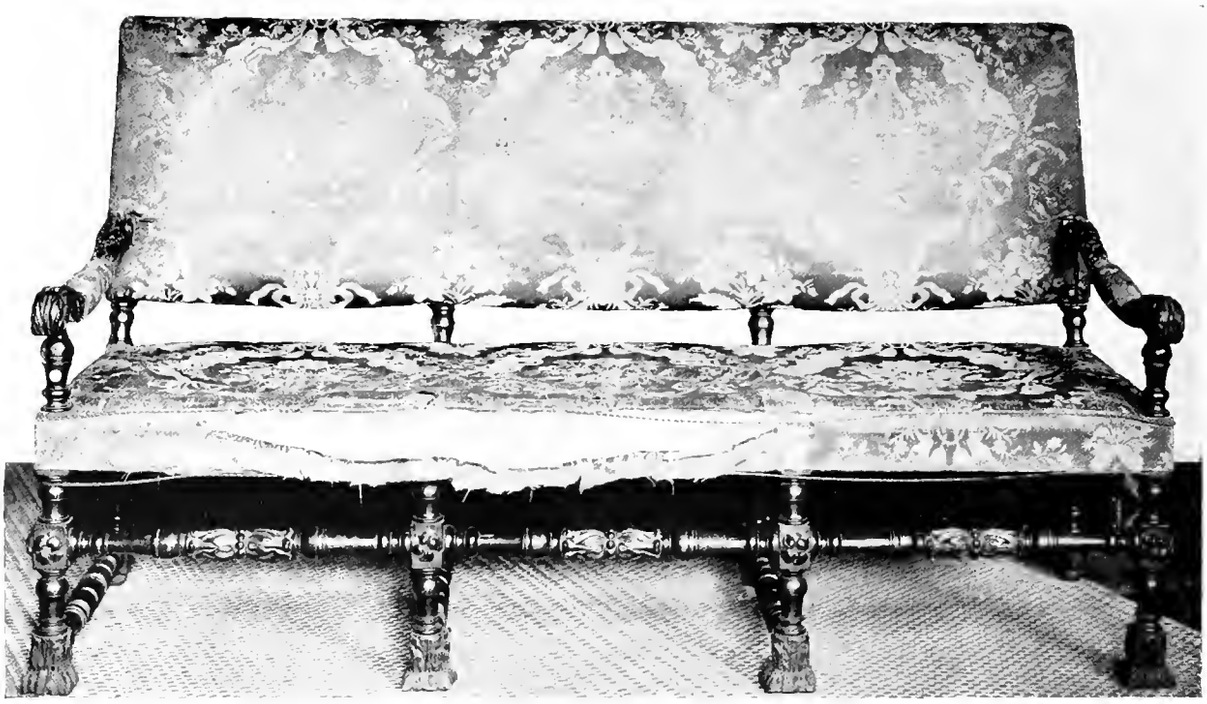


Fig. 319.

WALNUT SETTEE.

Showing the square-sectioned or " thermed " type of " bun " feet.

c. 1695. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

than in any other. Backs become taller, and seats narrower, as a rule, and there is an ever-growing tendency to use the turned baluster and the Flemish curve and C-scroll, and although these are general indications of later date, they are by no means infallible. Many chairs were made, before 1685, where the backs were disproportionately tall and the seats very narrow, and where a lavish use was made of the Flemish curves. After 1685 some chairs have low backs and broad seats, but in this dowelling on, instead of tenoning between balusters of the back crestings, we have an almost certain indication of a period subsequent to 1685. It will be as well to bear this in mind, as in some of the examples

Fig. 320.
WALNUT CHAIR.
The aristocratic type of 1685-89.

Frank Green, Esq.

Fig. 321.
WALNUT CHAIR.
Height, 3 ft. 8½ ins.; width, 1 ft. 5 ins.; to seat, 1 ft. 7½ ins.
The crude, or so-called provincial type.
c. 1690.

to be shown here, this is the only detail which establishes an early date for one, and a later period for another. Fig. 311, as an instance of this, is a typical James II chair in every respect, with the sole exception of the cresting fixed between the squares of the balusters. The Flemish double-scrolled curve is used everywhere, and vase-turning of legs and rails has superseded the former twisting. That this chair dates between 1680 and 1685 is unquestionable; it cannot be earlier than the first nor later than the second. It has, also, not the jumble of details which a later copy

Fig. 322.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
4 ft. 8 ins., floor to top of back.
1 ft. 10½ ins., width across front of seat.
Date about 1688.
C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

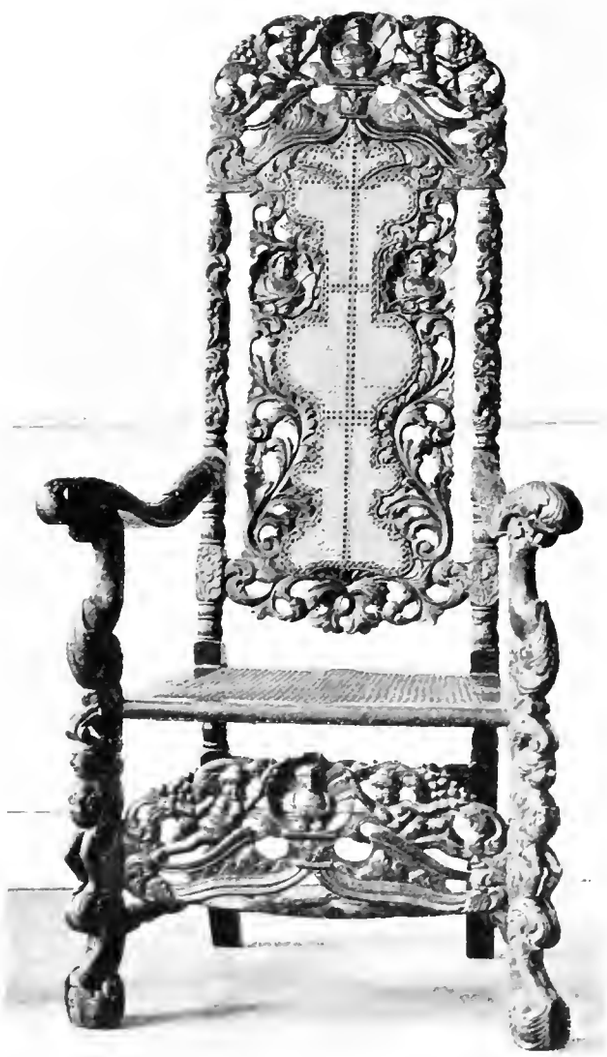


Fig. 323.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
(One of a pair.)
Date about 1685.

(made as a spontaneous creation and not as a deliberate imitation) would, almost certainly, have possessed. It is a fine chair, well designed and logically constructed.

There is, of course, a strong probability that many chair-makers may have refused to adopt this method of dowelling on a back-cresting. Thus Fig. 312 has the early style of back as far as this constructional method is concerned, but the seat-frame is no longer fixed between the projecting squares of the front legs, as in Fig. 300, but is spiked on them, the legs being turned without squares and with a pin at the top to secure the frame of the seat. That this is bad construction is unquestionable ; a chair has not only to support the weight of a sitter ; it must also withstand the lateral strain on seat and back which is exercised when a person braces himself, as in the act, for example, of pushing the

Fig. 324.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
c. 1690.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

Fig. 325.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
c. 1690.
Bond's Hospital, Coventry.

chair back while sitting in it, or in tilting the front legs from the floor. How great this strain is, especially when the back feet stand firmly, only a maker of chairs really appreciates. It would be fatal to one constructed in the manner of Fig. 312, and it will be noticed, when examining these James II chairs, that they have, almost invariably, been repaired, not on one, but on many occasions. They are examples of constructive principles sacrificed to design.

Fig. 326.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
Showing combination of Flemish curves and Spanish hooped stretcher.
c. 1690–5. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

Very effective use was made of the Flemish C-scroll after about 1680, as in the arm and small chairs from Lyme Park, Figs. 313 and 314, two fine examples, of high quality and choice designing, of the last Restoration years. The present stamped velvet, with which they are upholstered, is a mid-nineteenth-century addition. Fig. 315 shows the original finish of seat and back, and the lavish use of the C-scroll. The front stretcher of this chair introduces another foreign detail, that of the Dutch-Spanish bow, which we shall see further elaborated at a later stage. Fig. 316 has this bowed stretcher, in developed form, together with the ornate back which was becoming fashionable at the close of the reign of James II. The scrolled front legs of this chair are in the true Dutch manner of 1690 (which is about its date) used in conjunction with the earlier C-scrolling, a motive which was afterwards modified and adopted by Thomas Chippendale, and became the design-basis of his Rococo manner.

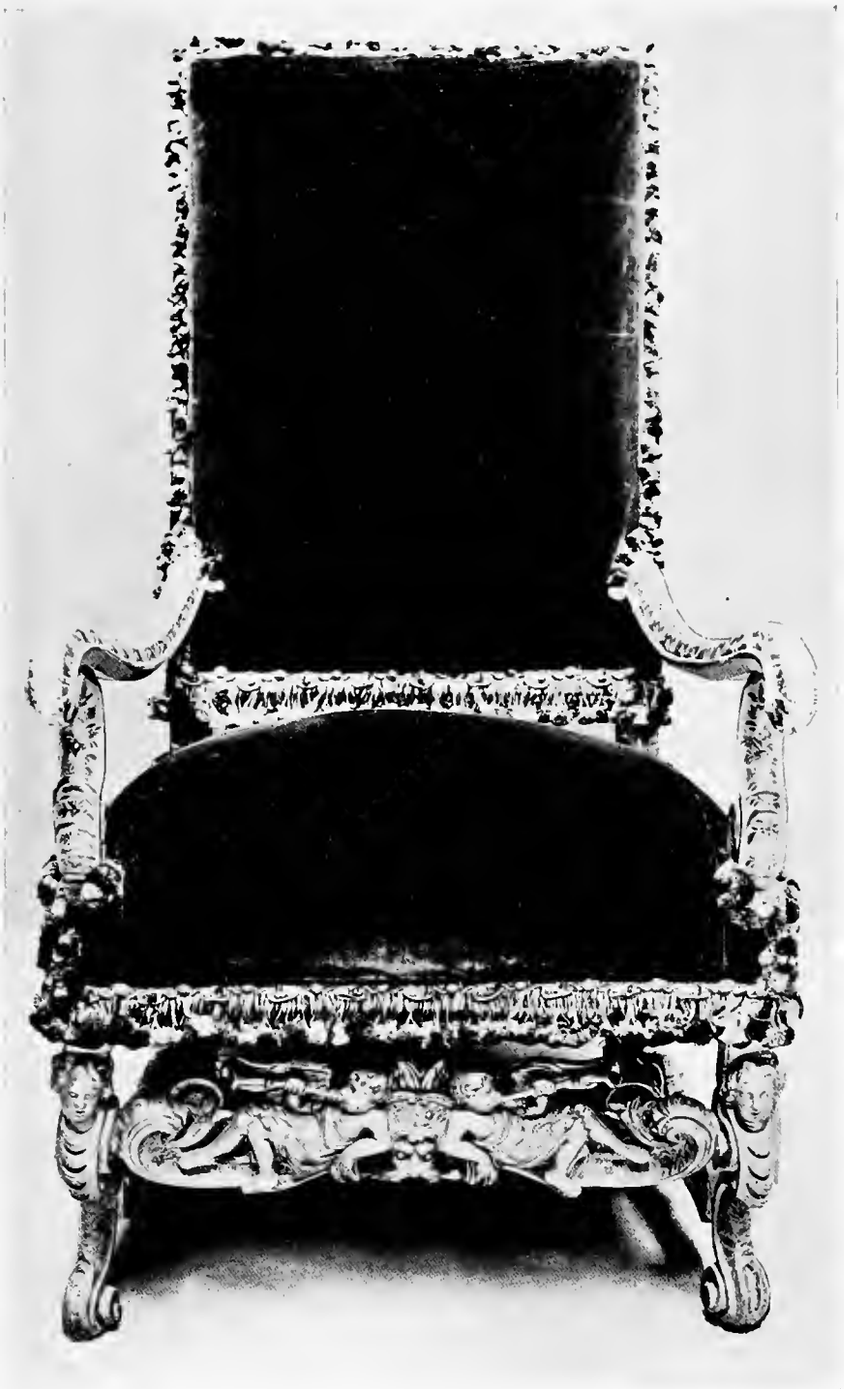


Fig. 327.

BEECH CHAIR, PAINTED AND GILT.

4 ft. 2 ins. floor to top of back; 2 ft. 3½ ins. across front of seat.; 1 ft. 5½ ins. floor to top of seat.

Date 1670–5. R. Eden Dickson, Esq.

It may have been remarked, in the foregoing illustration, that a chair with arms permitted of a better form of construction than one without, by reason of the fact that the arm-balusters, prolonged above the seat to the arms, braced the seat-framing firmly together. The Stuart oak chair provided a stout framing between the legs at the top, into which the seat panel,—nearly always solid,—was grooved. When constructional principles are sacrificed, it is nearly always an indication of a late and decadent fashion. Even after 1680 some attempts appear to have been made to retain the maximum of strength which the new mode would allow, as in the chair, Fig. 317, where the balusters and legs are effectively turned, and strongly tied with stretcher-rails, and the back-framing tenoned between the uprights in the early logical manner. A defined fashion appears to have existed for this revival of turning, as in the large arm-chair, Fig. 318, and the settee, Fig. 319. Both have the late detail of the flattened foot, in the first turned, but in the second square-moulded and carved, whereas in Fig. 317 the scrolled foot is of Spanish or Portuguese importation, often referred to as the " Braganza foot," a compliment to the Queen Consort of Charles II. Other details of Portuguese origin were introduced at this period, which will be indicated in later illustrations. One of

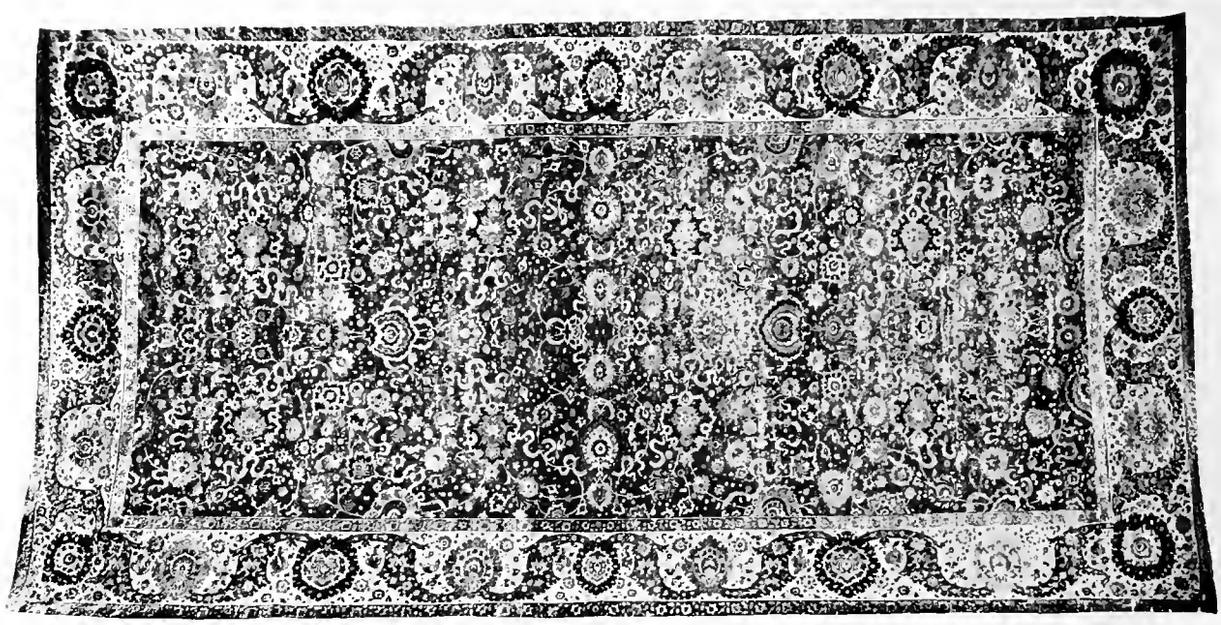


Fig. 328.

PERSIAN CARPET (ISPAHAN).

The type which was sparingly imported into England in the seventeenth century.

Mid-sixteenth century.

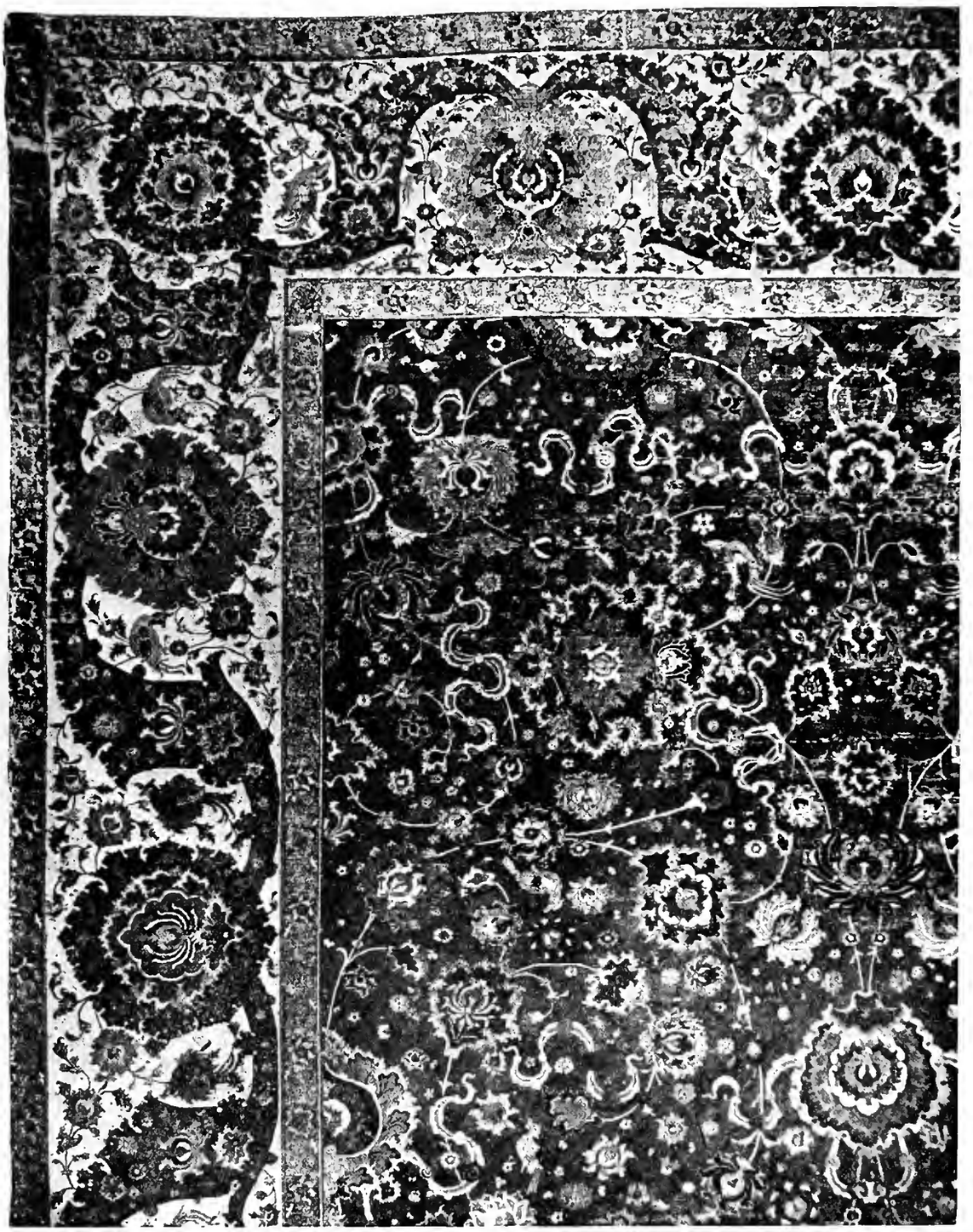


Fig. 329.

A SECTION OF THE CARPET, FIG. 328, SHOWING THE DESIGN.

these, the Portuguese bulb, can be seen, in embryonic form, in the stretcher-railing of Fig. 318.

The true James II chair, graceful in proportion, but with the weaknesses of construction which have been pointed out before, is shown in Fig. 320. The front legs have the strong Flemish double-curve, the back is tall, with side balusters fluted and reeded and the cresting rail of the back dowelled on them instead of being tenoned between. The open back has a central splat formed by a slender reeded muntin flanked by pendant husks, all finely carved. In spite of faulty construction, this is a finely proportioned and beautiful chair. The uneducated version of the same type can be seen in Fig. 321, which has the tradition of its time, but little designing ingenuity, being crude both in proportions and detail.

Faulty as these James II chairs are, indicating everywhere a decadent and debased fashion, the defects are less noticeable in the case of arm-chairs, for the reason just stated.

The social, and especially the aristocratic, life of England has always reacted upon the artistic craftsmanship of the nation. We have seen this, in a very striking manner, in the instance of the early furniture, and especially the woodwork, prior to the Reformation, as described and illustrated in the opening chapters of the previous volume. It is true that the fine productions of the joiner's craft in the fifteenth century were made for the Church, but this standard is not appreciably affected by the fact that this fine woodwork was made for clerical establishments. The absence of strife in those parts of England which were under the beneficent dominion of the Church, a state of rural peace coupled with practically no want nor privation, and an amount of leisure on the part of the artisans of England due to the easily procurable character of the subsistence of that period, all made for work of high artistic and technical skill. Time was neither reckoned, nor begrudged then, as it was during the latter part of the seventeenth century, and scamped work is usually associated with depravity of artistic taste and a loss of fine constructional traditions.

A more or less settled state of affairs, such as during the reign of Charles II, did much to atone for the lack of the cultured and discriminating patronage of the Church of former ages. Architecture was fast becoming a distinct profession, well grounded in classical traditions by Inigo Jones in the first half, and his followers in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and these architects had a direct influence on the interior decoration of their time, and, indirectly, on much of the furniture which was produced. Furniture, other than chairs and their kindred pieces, does not lose its earlier sturdy

Fig. 330.

WALNUT CHAIR.

The ornate back and hooped stretcher of *c.* 1685–90.

Bond's Hospital, Coventry.

Fig. 331.

WALNUT CHAIR.

The Spanish-Flemish stretcher. *c.* 1685–90.

Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

Fig. 332.

WALNUT CHAIR

(One of a pair.) *c.* 1805–90.

Biddenden Church, Kent.

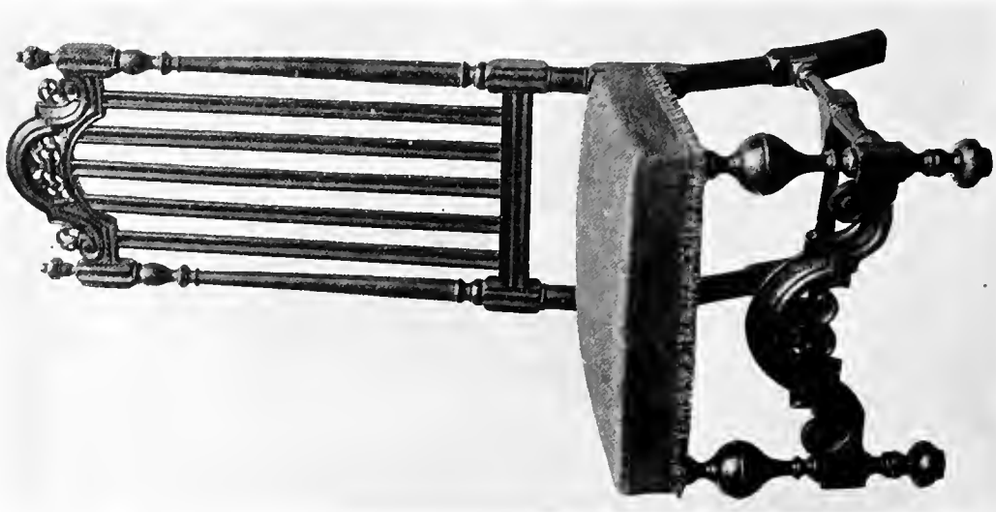


Fig. 335.
WALNUT CHAIR.
1 ft. 8½ ins. across seat.
c. 1685–90.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

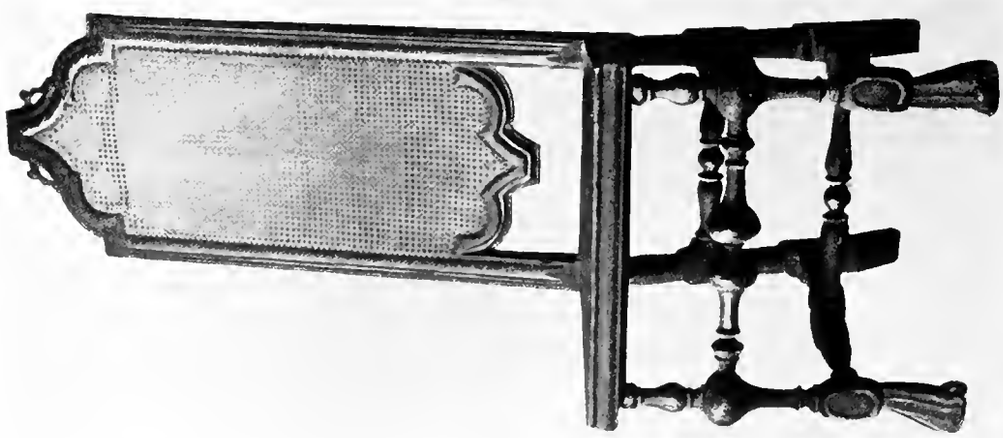


Fig. 334.
BEECH CHAIR, LACQUERED.
c. 1690.
The Worcester Museum.
Massachusetts, U.S.A.

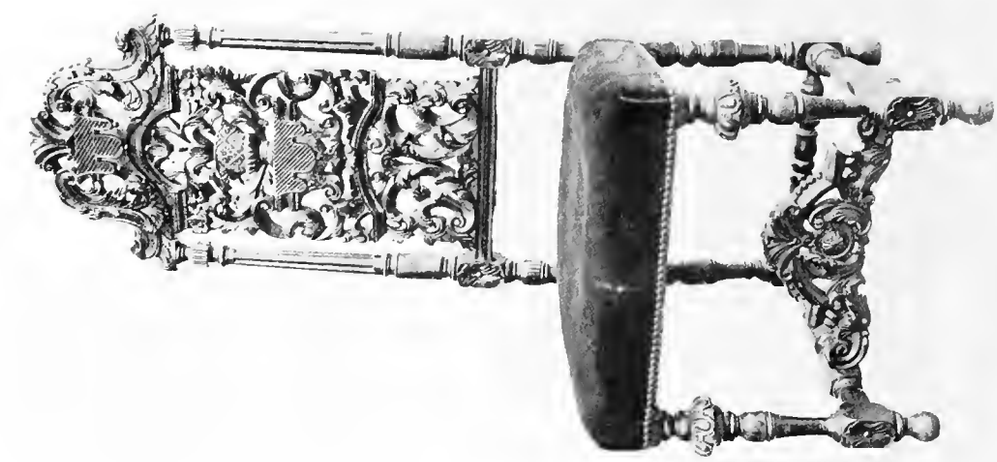


Fig. 333.
WALNUT CHAIR.
Height, 4 ft. 3 ins.; width, 1 ft. 7½ ins.; depth, 1 ft. 6 ins.
c. 1660.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 336.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1690.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

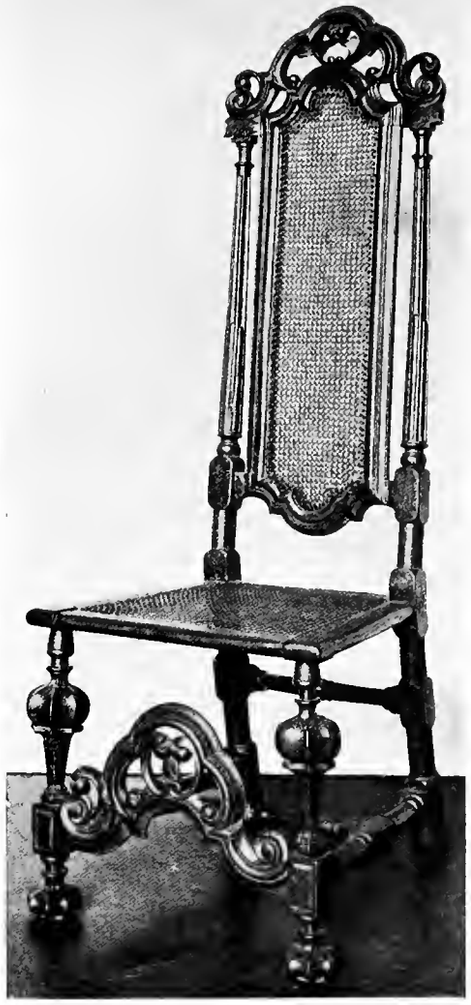


Fig. 337.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1685–90.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 338.
WALNUT CHAIR.
c. 1690–5.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

character after the Restoration, and, although the fashion for chairs of lighter form and construction rapidly replaced the taste for the former cumbrous models, there is still a logical method pursued, and only departed from in the concluding years of the reign of Charles II.

With the accession of the Duke of York, under the title of James II, England was again in a turmoil for a space of about four years. The rebellion of Monmouth, the rise of the factions which favoured William of Orange, and the threat of strife and insurrection throughout England shook the Court and its satellites to their foundations. Neither life nor property was secure under the last of the Stuarts. A treacherous race,

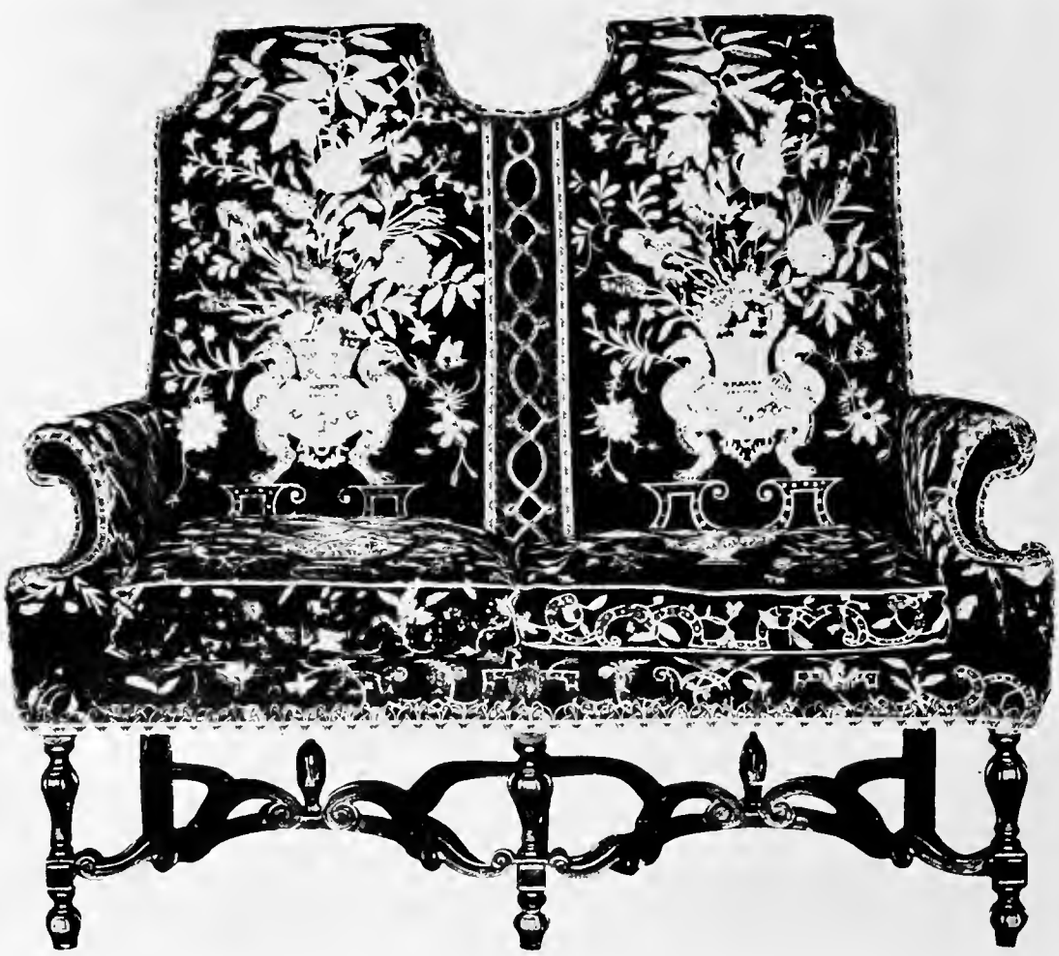


Fig. 339.

WALNUT SETTEE.

With original needlework covering on a morine ground.

c. 1690–5. Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

they were known and distrusted as such by all with whom they associated. True, Charles II had shown some gratitude to certain of those who had befriended him after Worcester, but his liberality, or rather his extravagant profusion, was that rather of sheer carelessless than of studied repayment for services rendered. It was soon realised that another libertine king was on the throne of England, and the period of profligacy which followed again impoverished the country, although it also fostered artistic productions in woodwork, furniture and fabrics, in the way in which an age of vice always has done and a sober and moral era has equally failed to do.

Considering the bigoted character of the last of the Stuarts, his short and unsettled reign before he fled, for safety, to the Court of St. Germains, it is not surprising that artistic craftsmanship in wood or silk declined from its former fine traditions; it is surprising that anything was produced worthy of the name. The exiled French Huguenots were the saving factor, and show how the arts of a country are fostered and developed by the artisans, and not the aristocratic classes. There is little doubt that these French émigrés were largely, if not entirely responsible for many of the finer productions in the way of furniture, in the years from 1685 to 1689, as we know that their influence on the long-case clocks of the same period (from their signatures on the

Fig. 340.
WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.
The Portuguese ball or bulb turning of 1690 and the flat serpentine stretcher of 1695.

c. 1695.
Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

dials) was immediate and manifest. Thus in chairs such as Figs. 322 and 323 there is a skill in designing, a capability of assimilating forms from France and the Low Countries, which only these cultured Frenchmen would have possessed. In Fig. 322 the Spanish hooped front stretcher is used in a manner far more decorative than in Figs. 315 and 316, for example. The embryonic flat serpentine stretcher of Flanders can be seen here, a detail which became very general in the chairs of the next reign. The back is formed of eight curves, framing a caned panel flanked with pierced and well-carved scroll-work. There is an entire absence of the Flemish vigour and coarseness such as in Fig. 311, although the latter is a fine chair of its type.

Fig. 341.

WALNUT ARM-CHAIR.

4 ft. 3½ ins. floor to top of back. 2 ft. 2 ins. across front of seat. The pierced cup-turning of 1695.

Fig. 323 is a beautiful chair of slightly earlier date, but of similar origin. The designing of the front legs, and their prolongations as arm-balusters, the sweeping and foliating of the arms, and the form of the back with its cresting and balusters, all show a skill and creative ability of a high order. Of the chairs which bridge the Stuart and the Orange periods, Figs. 324 and 325 may be given as examples, although neither of the two is in its complete and original state. The first has the long fluted and reeded back balusters as in Fig. 322, with a similar Flemish curved front leg and Spanish type of stretcher, with an additional flat swept rail, set back from the front legs between the cross-rails which tie the front and back legs together. The caning of the back has been replaced by upholstery, and the framing of the panel itself

appears to be a later addition. The same fate has overtaken the arm-chair from Bond's Hospital, the back framing and its caning being later, and unfortunate additions. The turning of the front legs and the arm balusters show the beginning of the inverted cup-form which became so popular during the early Orange years. The original caned seat here has been replaced by a flat board. The familiar C-scroll has been employed in the decoration of the Spanish hooped stretcher, and the flat Flemish serpentine form is also used, as in Fig. 322. There is the same influence evident in both, in spite of material differences in their design, and certain features which place Fig. 325 as the later of the two. Although of about the same date as Fig. 324, there is an absence of the Flemish coarse vigour in the scrolling of the arms or the cresting to the back. Fig. 326 is a typical Low-Country model of this period, unusual in having turned balusters above C-scrolled legs. This scrolling is also used, in a crude, but effective way, for the stretcher uniting the front legs. The moulded seat rail is a subsequent application, fixed after the seat has been upholstered, a method of avoiding the use of fringe or braid which was frequently employed, especially with chairs where the back consisted of a solid upholstered panel, separately framed with mouldings to correspond.

The method of upholstering the backs of chairs in one panel, framed round with mouldings, is a French manner which was introduced shortly after 1690. The open arm-chair with padded seat and back, although rare, was not unknown in the later years of the reign of Charles II. Fig. 327 is one of a set of six made for the State

Fig. 342.
BEECH PAINTED CHAIR.
(One of a pair.)
The flat serpentine stretcher of 1695.
Viscount Rothermere.

Bedroom at Glemham Hall, during the years from 1670 to 1675, but they were exceptional chairs for this period. Covered with a fine crimson silk velvet, and tasselled fringes of yellow and brown, with frames painted a cream white, with tiny flowers, and the carving parcel-gilt, they are extraordinarily fine examples of the art of the chairmaker of the later Restoration years. The front stretcher is in the ornate manner of the period, carved with power and skill. The set was made to match the State Bed at Glemham, and it is significant as showing the mode of the time that such rich furniture was made for a bedroom.

The standard of comfort in the living rooms, even of the wealthy, and as late as the reign of Charles II, was exceedingly meagre, compared with the furnishings of the next century. It was only in the bedrooms of the larger houses that upholstered chairs and patterned carpets (either imported from the East, or made of coarse woolwork on a tambour frame in the fashion of gros-point needlework) were used, and even then they were exceptional. That at this period, as at all others, certain sybarites existed who were far in advance of their time, in refinement of ideas, is unquestionable, but these were in an extreme minority. At Knole Park are several Persian carpets from the province of Ispahan, which were probably imported at this date, and in the whole history of Persian carpet weaving, the glory of these fine Ispahan rugs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has never been surpassed, or even equalled, for beauty of design and jewel-like quality of colouring. The mere pleasure of illustrating a priceless work of art may excuse the inclusion here of Figs. 328 and 329, one of these fine Ispahan carpets, probably of early sixteenth-century date, in general view

Fig. 343.

BEECH GILT CHAIR.

The thermed leg and crested stretcher of 1695.

and detail, which may serve to show the floor coverings of this period which were available, and which were imported,—all too sparingly,—to enrich the important rooms in the large houses of such of the Restoration nobility as possessed the necessary taste to appreciate them.

As a general rule, however, both the domestic life and ideas of this time were crude and coarse, as we can gather from such literature as Wycherley's plays, for example, which fully represented the fashionable ideas of their time. It was an age of bestiality rather than of vice;—as the latter term appears to convey some idea of a perverted refinement which was almost entirely absent in the later Stuart years. That the plays of Wycherley,—which, with their unparalleled licentiousness, would not be tolerated, even in an expurgated form, on the English stage of the present day,—reflected the spirit of the time, is shown by the applause with which they were received. Garrick, in the next century, attempted to Bowdlerise "*The Country Wife*," under the title of "*The County Girl*," and, although assisted by the acting of the famous Mrs. Jordan, failed in the endeavour to render a late Stuart play clean enough even for the not over-nice eighteenth century. Voltaire was equally unsuccessful with "*The Plain Dealer*," which he attempted to purify in "*La Prude*." Apart from the rank indecency of the dialogue, the ideas expressed are indescribably coarse. That Wycherley mirrored the aristocratic ideas of his age when he counselled the marrying of a widow, or peer's daughter, who must be young and handsome, and, above all, rich, and the spending of her fortune on loose women (the Court of Charles II abounded with such) and other debauchery, is unquestionable. That domestic refinement, in an age which had brought

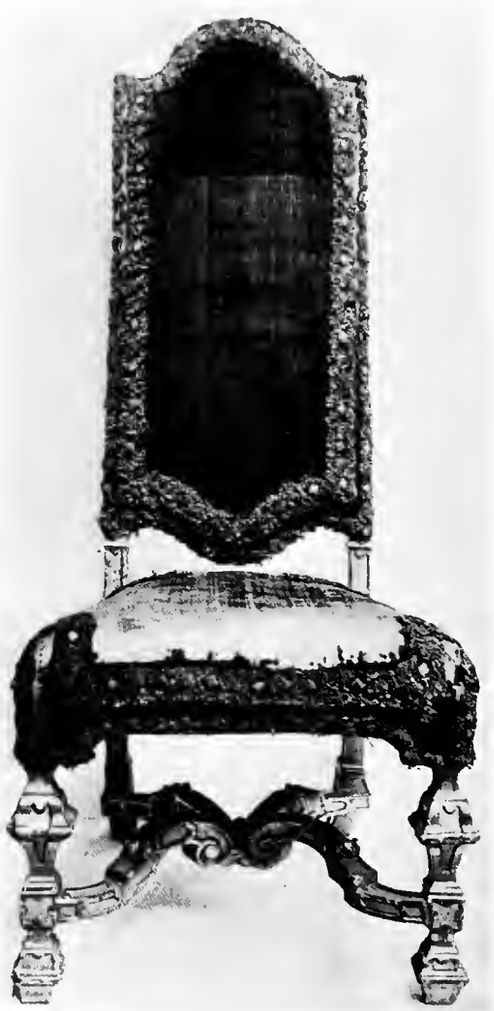


Fig. 344.
BEECH CHAIR, GILT.
(One of a pair.)
4 ft. 6 ins. floor to top of back.
1 ft. 6 ins. width across front of seat.
c. 1695–1700.
Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

Fig. 345.

WALNUT EASY CHAIR.

The cup-turned leg of 1690–5 combined with the decorated stretcher of the later Restoration years.

c. 1690–5. Chas. Young, Esq.

vice to this bestial level, must have been rare, if not almost unknown, can be imagined. It must not be supposed that the actual furniture which was made was crude. We have seen that this is far from being the fact. Rich carving or inlay was general, and gorgeous covering fabrics by no means unusual, but floors strewn with rushes, and littered with the debris of meals thrown to the dogs of the household, rarely changed, and generally in a filthy state, were also not exceptional, even in the rooms which contained this ornate furniture of this late Stuart period.

In place of the earlier caning, backs of chairs began to be greatly elaborated in the early years of William III. Fig. 330, another example from Bond's Hospital, has the rich French type of pierced and carved back, in conjunction with the Flemish curved legs and cross-stretcher. Another departure at this date, which may be noted here, is that this stretcher is no longer tenoned into the front legs but into the side rails. This is an early example of a fashion which subsequently became very general. Fig. 331 has the ornate back and baluster-turned front legs curiously reeded on the lower member. In proportion and the style of carving of the back there is a strong suggestion of Italian influence in this chair. Fig. 332, is one of a pair in the chancel of Biddenden Church in Kent, of graceful form and fine detail, unusually well preserved. The stretcher is here tenoned into the front legs, but placed higher up than is usually the case, two squares being left by the turner for this purpose. The development of this feature is shown in Fig. 334, a characteristic tall-back chair of Portuguese type (especially in the bulb-pattern of the turning) now in the Worcester Museum in Massachusetts. This chair had originally been lacquered a bright red, and it has recently been restored to as nearly its original state as possible. The suggestion of Gothic tracery at the top of the back (which can be seen through the caning) is exceedingly interesting and almost unique in a chair of this period. The scrolled foot is in the Spanish manner already described.

Fig. 346.
WALNUT STOOL.
The octagonal-section form of the Orange "cup-turned" leg, combined with the Braganza foot.
c. 1695.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

This Portuguese bulb-turning develops in various ways, and finally culminates

in the inverted cup, which is such a typical Orange detail. In the fine chair, Fig. 333, this cup-turning is already suggested, but the cup is gadroon-carved, whereas, at a late stage, this member is seldom decorated in any way. In this chair, which is directly inspired from French sources, especially in its elaborate back and cresting, the carved stretcher is set back from the front face of the legs, and fixed between the side rails in the same manner as in Fig. 330.

The further development of this Portuguese bulb-turning can be traced in the next four illustrations, which bridge the years from 1685 to 1695. Fig. 335 has the bulb with a central bead, whereas in Fig. 336 it caps a tapered shaft. The front stretcher here is also set back between the cross rails. Fig. 337 has the bulb carved in a representation of a pomegranate both on the legs and the feet. The back cresting and the stretcher,—which correspond,—show the development from the earlier form of 1685–9. A curious detail here is the corner blocks to the seat-framing, evidently inserted for greater strength, into which the framing rails are tenoned.

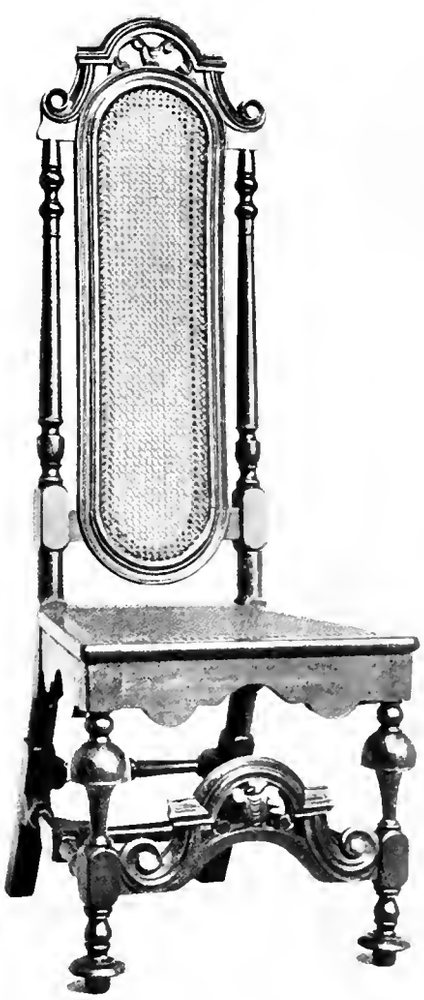


Fig. 347.
WALNUT CHAIR.
The tall-back chair of 1685–9 with the cup-turned leg of 1695.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

Fig. 338 has still the late Stuart tall and narrow back, with a central pierced and carved splat, flanked by two moulded laths. The seat has been made for upholstery, with a carved "apron-piece" under the front rail. The front legs have the cup-turning, which, with the "bun" feet and the flat stretchering, place this chair some years later than the last of the Stuarts.

While the prevalence of a fashion may account for the strong similarity in the design of many of the tall chairs, there are details of almost identical character which suggest that the area of production must have been restricted. These were the aristocratic chairs of their period; we have seen, in the preceding chapter, that to place the late Stuart chairs in strict chronological order would entail both oak and walnut chairs

being illustrated together, however widely they might differ, not only in material, detail and proportion, but in constructive principles as well. The oak and walnut examples have been kept apart in this book, for obvious reasons, but it must not be forgotten that both were made at the same period, although the fashion for oak was declining, and walnut chairs were taking their place as the mode of the time. It is inevitable, with this insulating of examples for the purposes of reference and to trace developments of types, that they acquire an exclusiveness which they do not really possess.

The fine settee from Lyme Park, Fig. 339, shows the bulb-turning of front legs and the typical flat serpentine stretcher, centred with a turned finial, which became the fashion shortly after 1690. The evolution of this type may be followed in succeeding illustrations. Fig. 340 is a large arm-chair from the same house, with its original covering and fringe. The material here is a flat-pile velvet with an applique of bullion braiding, whereas the settee is upholstered with very elaborate stitchery on a morine ground. Both examples, together with the chair from Glemham Hall, Fig. 327, show the influence of the French Huguenot weavers and artists exiled in consequence of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Fig. 341 is the more fully developed version of Fig. 340, with arm balusters and front legs cut out and carved, in a manner which suggests Chinese inspiration, as exhibited in the ivory carvings from Nankin. Fig. 342 is a fine chair from Hemsted, of beech stained black, with the inward C-scrolled leg of the fashion of Figs. 316 and 326, and the voluted Spanish foot. The covering is an old Genoese or patterned velvet on a cream ground with tasselled fringe to match, of considerable age, but not original to the chair. Fig. 343 has the square-sectioned leg inspired

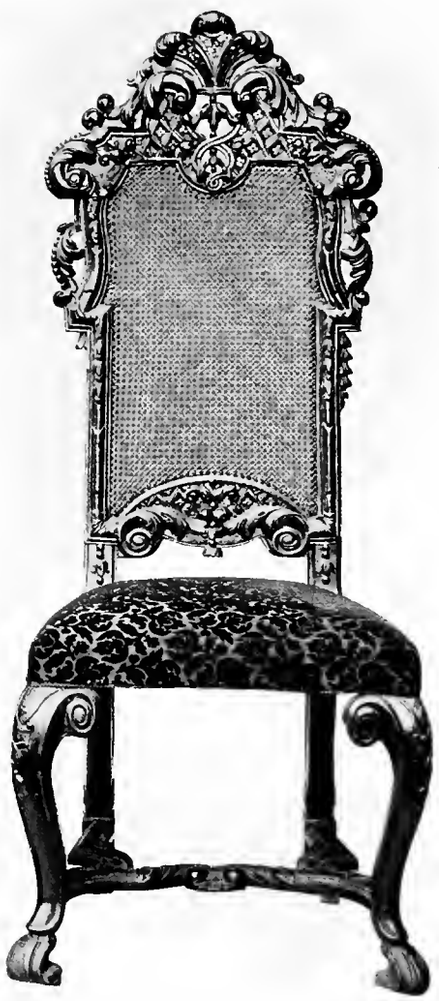


Fig. 348.
WALNUT CHAIR.
(? Dutch.)
The embryonic cabriole leg.
c. 1695–1700.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

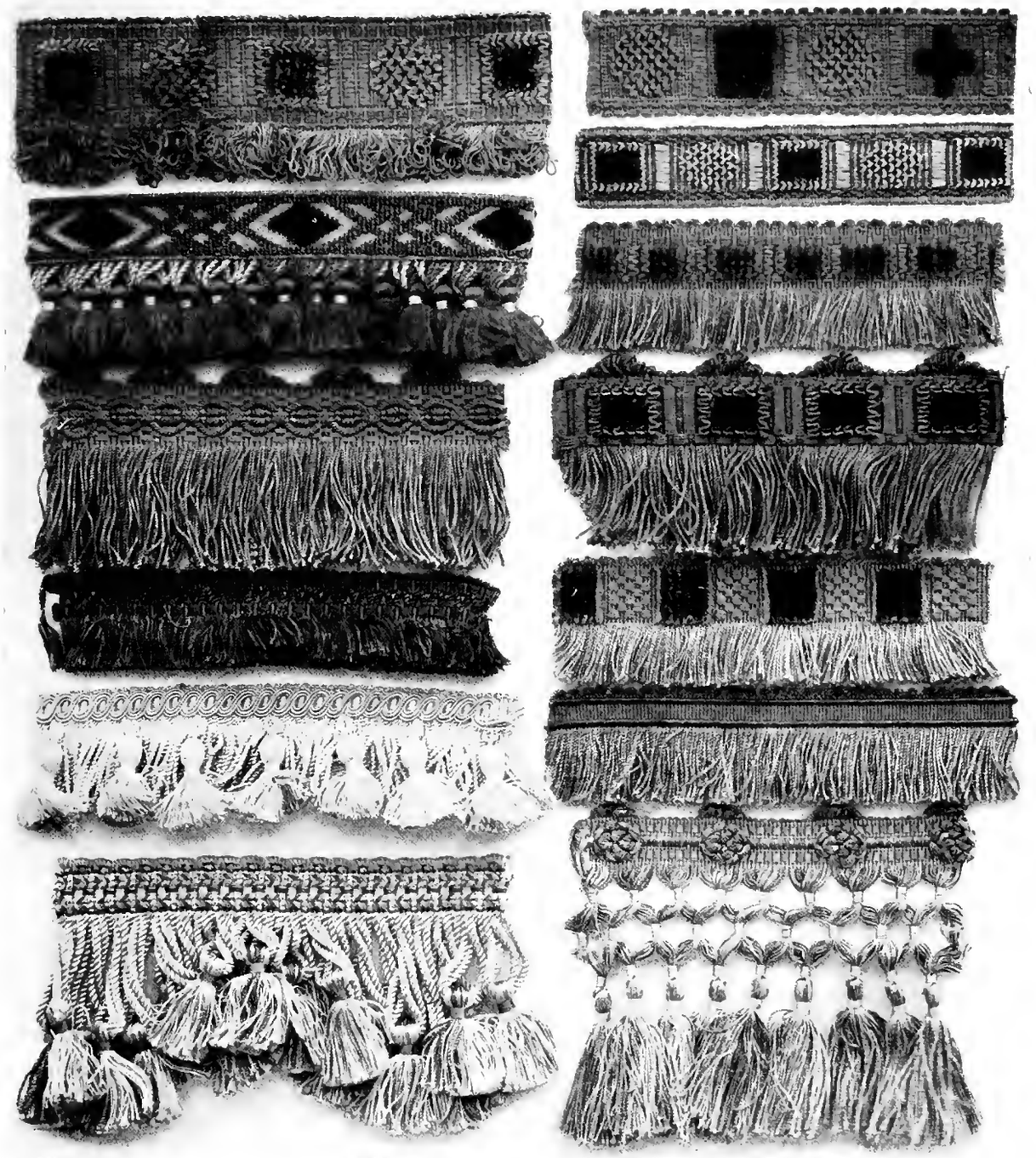
from the later Louis XIV period, and the French version of the Orange flat serpentine stretcher.

This square-sectioned leg became a very favourite alternative to the more usual turning, shortly before 1700, especially with chairs made for important houses. Fig. 344, one of a pair, is in the advanced fashion of 1695–1700, and shows the type of chair which was specifically designed to display the elaborate silks and velvets which were being woven by the French Huguenots in Spitalfields and elsewhere at this date. The upholstery of this period is characterised not only by the exceptional quality of its covering fabrics, but also by the lavish use of magnificent braidings or tasselled fringes of silk and bullion. Unfortunately, this use of metal in conjunction with silk has been the direct cause of the perishing of these trimmings by the cutting or abrading of the fabric.

This chair is directly copied from French models, but it possesses a grace in proportion and a charm in detail which are unmistakably English. It is only when chairs of this kind are found, divested of their original coverings and trimmings, that the full value of these adjuncts, even if in the last stage of dilapidation, is appreciated. From the point of view of the practical chairmaker, as well as that of the designer, these tall graceful chairs, of the closing years of the seventeenth century, are superior to any which were made during the years from 1660 to 1690.

Of slightly earlier date, but in the same fine manner, is the interesting wing chair, Fig. 345, which has its original covering of pale blue-green damask, but has been shorn of its fringes. Here the front legs have the Spanish vase-form from which the inverted cup-turning develops. It is rare to find an easy chair of this form and date with legs and carved stretcher as in this example. Fig. 346 is one of the stools of about the same period, with legs of similar detail, and the fully-developed flat serpentine Orange stretcher. Fig. 347 shows the smooth undecorated cup-turning of the front legs and the flattened foot of 1695, on a chair which, otherwise, is late Stuart in proportion and detail. Fig. 348, which concludes this series, is a chair, the English origin of which is questionable, although many of a similar kind were made in this country just prior to 1700. Apart from the French back, in the later Louis XIV manner which was adopted and freely rendered in Holland and Belgium at this period, this chair possesses a great interest in illustrating the beginning of the development towards the smooth cabriole leg finishing in a plain club foot, which is so characteristic, not only of the early eighteenth century, but of the narrow margin of years contained in the duration of the reign of Anne. With chairs, therefore, although not with other furniture,

it is possible to coincide the conclusion of this chapter with that of the seventeenth century itself, leaving the later development of the English walnut chair to be further considered in a later book.



EXAMPLES OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH FRINGES AND BRAIDS AS USED ON LATE STUART AND ORANGE FURNITURE.

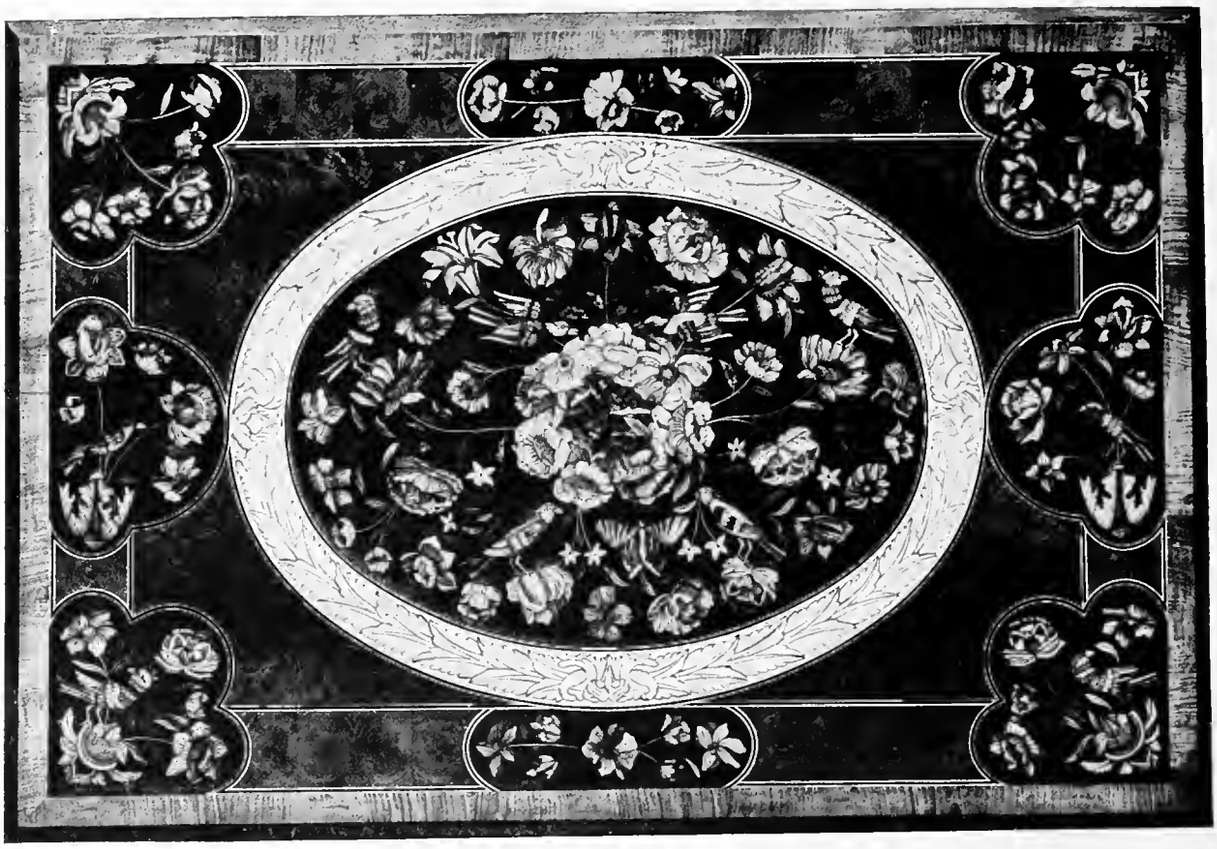


Fig. 349.

TABLE-TOP INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE.

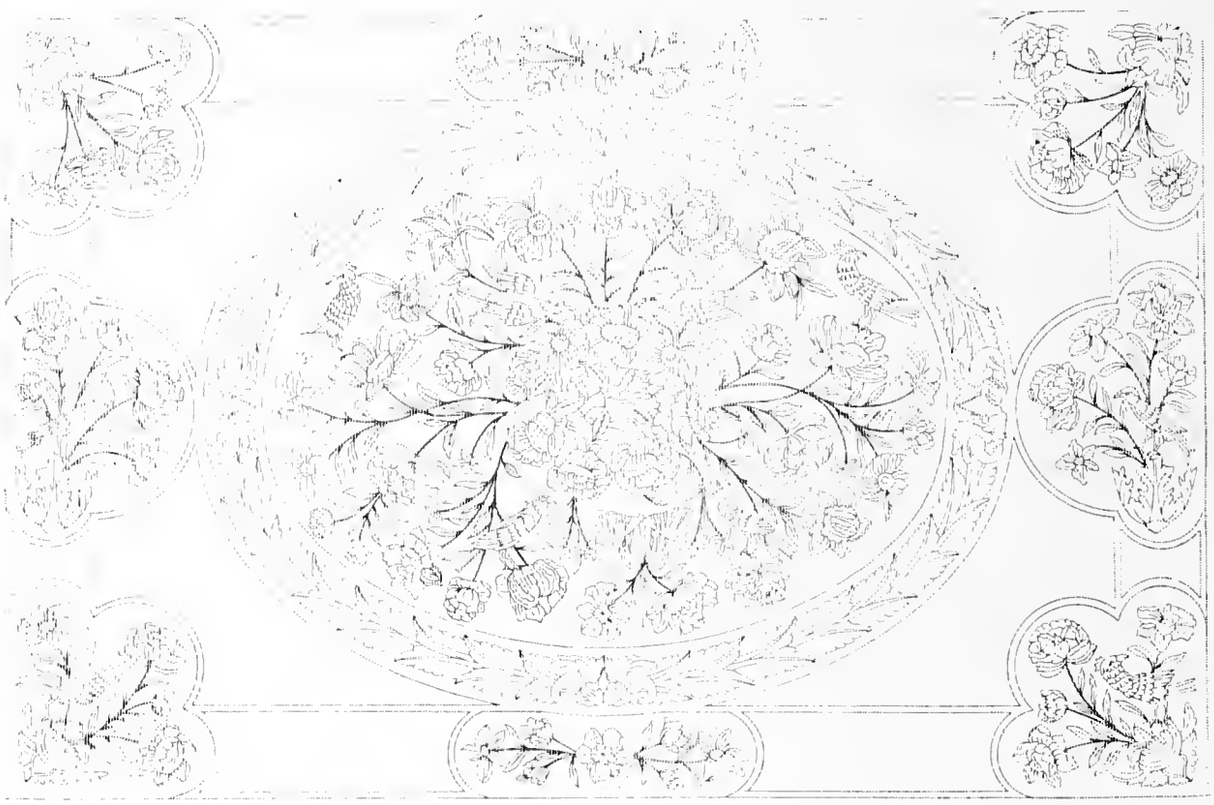


Fig. 350.

A "PRICKING" OF THE MARQUETERIE OF THE ABOVE TABLE-TOP.

Chapter V.

English Marqueterie.

BEFORE proceeding with the subject matter of this chapter, it will be necessary to define the terms which it is proposed to use. It appears to be a general idea that inlay and marqueterie are interchangeable designations. Even were this an actual fact, it would be necessary, for the better understanding of the subject, to make a distinction between the two. In previous chapters there have been many references to inlay. In Stuart oak furniture a coarse ornament of holly and fruit-woods is quite a familiar detail, as we have seen. It would be misleading, however, to describe this as marqueterie, for the reason that the name implies a process as well as a result. Marqueterie is an inlay, yet inlay is not necessarily marqueterie, and it will be advisable to explain exactly where the difference lies.

Tudor and Stuart inlay consists of pieces of lighter or darker woods which are chopped into the solid oak background, and then "cleaned up" with the plane, scraper or glass-paper. Marqueterie is a pattern formed by inlaying various woods, metals or materials such as pearl or ivory, into veneers, the whole being then glued down, or "laid," with the hot caul, the press, or the veneering hammer.

A third subdivision may be attempted here, that of parqueterie, where the inlay as a whole, or in part, is formed by putting together pieces of various woods to form patterns, in much the same way as a parquet floor is laid. The familiar "Nonsuch" chests are examples of this method of inlaying (see Figs. 47 and 48).

For the purpose of appreciating problems which will arise at a later stage, the following account of the methods of the marqueterie cutter may be of service.

The pattern to be inlaid is first prepared and drawn out on paper, which is then "pricked," that is, the design is perforated with a needle in much the same way as if it were followed by a sewing machine (see Fig. 351 for this operation). The result is the master-pattern or "pricking." If this design be laid flat on a sheet of plain white paper,—paper-hanger's lining paper of light weight is the best,—and "pounced" through, or in other words, dusted over with a small bag of porous linen filled with fine brown or black powder (bitumen powder is nearly always used) a replica of the design will be found on the paper underneath. To prevent the powder from rubbing

off in the handling, the pounced sheet is laid on a hot metal plate placed on a charcoal fire or a gas-stove, and the design burned in. Care must be taken to see that the heat is not too great or the paper will scorch. For the work several of these impressions are taken ; the first is pasted on to the veneer background, the others cut up, according to the various coloured woods or material required for the inlay, and pasted on to the pieces selected. Fig. 350, shows a marqueterie pricking or pattern. An alternative method, and one which is usually followed in the case of small panels, especially where the inlay is in the one wood,—seaweed marqueterie of holly or sycamore in walnut, for example,—is to cut both inlay and ground at the one operation. If the saw be kept rigidly at right angles to the work (and with the former running in guides, as it does, and the latter firmly held in the "chops" of the marqueterie-cutter's "donkey," this is comparatively easy) the inlay must fit its ground exactly. The pieces which fall away from the saw are usually preserved, and used as counterpart panels, the effect being, of course, reversed. If the original be one of light wood in dark walnut, then the counterpart will be an inlay of walnut in light wood. It is not exceptional, especially in the instance of long-case clocks, to find one which is the exact counterpart of another, proving that the marqueterie of both must have been cut by the same workman, and at the one operation.

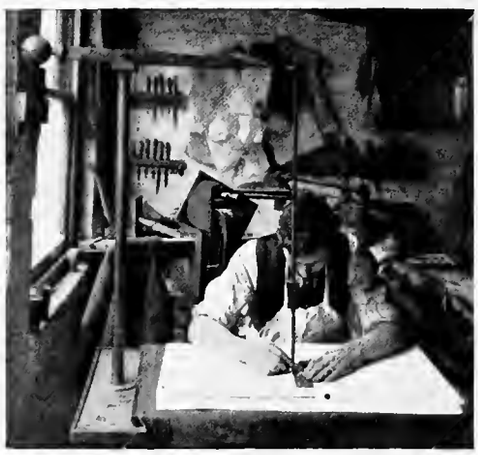


Fig. 351.
PRICKING THE DESIGN.

Fig. 352.
CUTTING MARQUETERIE.
The use of the "donkey."

It is usual to cut veneers, whether for ground or inlay, or both, in layers of four or six at a time, both the outer layers, on each side,—generally of common wood,—being discarded, as the motion of the saw has a tendency to rag the cut on the outer pieces. If only one panel be required, and cut with ground and inlay at the one time, a common wood is used for these outer

layers. From this it follows that the labour involved in cutting six panels is the same as with a single one, the extra value of the wood and the time in fitting the marqueterie together being the only additional cost.

Fig. 353.
PUTTING MARQUETERIE TOGETHER.

The marqueterie cutter sits astride on a narrow bench of chair height, at the end of which is a lateral wooden vice or "chops," placed at a convenient height for working. The "chops" are closed by the action of the foot on a treadle. The bench with its vice is known as a "donkey" (see Fig. 352). Each section of the inlay, in its six layers of veneer secured together with panel-pins or fine nails, is then held in the vice and cut with a fine saw, held in a long frame running laterally in guides. The wood is turned round to the various positions demanded, by opening and closing the "chops"; the saw only makes a horizontal backward and forward motion. The ground is cut in the same manner, care being taken, with a large panel, to prevent breakage. If the design be symmetrical, large panels are usually cut in four quarters at the same operation, the pieces then being joined together (see Fig. 375).

Fig. 354.
SAND-BURNING OR SHADING.

Both inlay and ground, being cut from identical patterns pounced from the same master "pricking," should fit exactly if the cutting be accurately done, even if ground and inlay be separately cut. When this cutting is finished, the work is fitted together, each piece in its allotted position, and a sheet of paper glued over the outer, or exposed side, to keep the whole in place. The panel is then left to dry thoroughly, usually in a screw-press. (See Fig. 353, which illustrates this putting together of a marqueterie panel.)

Another operation may be explained here, although it is not generally used during the period from 1685 to 1700, that of shading or sand-burning (see Fig. 354). The pieces to be shaded are held with a pair of tweezers

and dipped into a bowl or pan containing very hot silver sand. The usual plan is to have a flat iron tray filled with the sand and placed over a small gas-ring. The corners only of the pieces are dipped, as where the wood touches the sand it burns to a deep brown, and from this point shades away, gradually, into the colour of the wood itself. It is obvious that only light-coloured woods can be shaded in this manner.

Fig. 355.
LABURNUM "OYSTER-PIECE."
(Cut transversely from sapling.)

The laying of the marqueterie veneer is the work of the cabinet-maker, not of the marqueterie cutter. The surface to be veneered is planed, scraped and finished perfectly smooth and level, and is then roughened with the "toothing plane" to afford a key. The underside of the veneer is toothed in like manner. The edge of the iron of a toothing plane is slightly serrated, and it is pitched nearly upright instead of at the usual angle. Its action, therefore, is rather that of a scraper than of a plane.

Having prepared the wood, the panel or flat surface is brushed over with hot glue of proper consistency, the glue being allowed to become quite cold. The marqueterie veneer is then placed on its surface, paper side uppermost, and secured, to prevent slipping, by headless "veneer" pins, which are allowed to project above the surface about two-thirds of their length. A flat piece of wood, slightly larger than the panel, technically known as a "caul," and made from soft wood such as pine, is then made very hot and placed on the veneer, handscrews being quickly applied to squeeze the whole together with great force. It is obvious that the contact surface of the caul must be level or the pressure on the veneer will not be exerted equally, and subsequent blistering will result.[1] The pressure of the handscrews should be applied to the centre first, to drive the glue outwards. The heat from the caul penetrates through the veneer

[1] To make sure that the pressure shall be from the centre to the edges, and thus to drive out the superfluous glue, a caul is usually made slightly convex on its under surface. A good plan is to place a piece of felt between the caul and the work, as this ensures perfect contact everywhere, by taking up any surface irregularities. To prevent this felt from sticking to the work, should any glue exude through the cutting of the ornament itself, it is usual to rub it with soap.

and liquefies the cold glue underneath. The headless pins, used to keep the veneer in position, are forced into the soft wood instead of being driven home into the panel (seeking the line of least resistance), and when the caul is removed can be extracted with pliers or pincers.

In the process outlined above a trap exists for the inexperienced. If the veneer be laid with hot glue, the heat will cause the veneer to expand before the handscrews can be applied, and it will be put down in a state of strain, and will remain so after the glue has hardened. In the course of time this strain results either in pulling the veneered surface hollow, or if too well secured, the veneer will crack until the tension be relieved. All wood veneered on the one side only will always warp somewhat in the

Fig. 356.

CHEST OF DRAWERS.

Veneered with oyster-pieces of walnut and banded with sycamore.

Date about 1700–5. Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

direction of the veneered side, but when hot glue is used, and the veneer applied immediately, this pull will be excessive.

This casting or cracking of surfaces which have been veneered in the wrong way is a more important point than would appear, at first glance. Where original marqueterie is found with the veneer split in this way, it is strong presumptive evidence that it must have been laid by a workman unacquainted with the technicalities of his craft. When the heat is applied by the agency of the caul only, the veneer is secured by the hand-screws before it can penetrate through to the glue beneath, and there is no expansion, with subsequent contraction, and the work should stand. A modern innovation is the

Fig. 357.

CHEST OF DRAWERS.

Veneered with oyster pieces of olive wood and lignum vitæ and inlaid with boxwood lines.

3 ft. 3½ ins. high by 3 ft. 2 ins. wide by 1 ft. 11 ins. deep.

Date about 1695. J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

veneering press, where panels are placed between two large metal plates and squeezed together by powerful screws. A number of gas-jets placed underneath keeps the plates and the work hot until the pressure has been applied, after which the gas is turned off and the work allowed to cool. With large panels, it is important that the pressure should be applied to the centres first and to the edges afterwards, otherwise the liquefied glue will be imprisoned in the centre and will be unable to escape from the edges. It must be remembered that glue, even when quite cold, is still soft for a very long time after the panel has been veneered, and as the air is more or less kept from it by the panel on the one side and the veneer on the other, the process of hardening is a very gradual

Fig. 358.

CHEST OF DRAWERS.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie of holly and sycamore.

2 ft. 10½ ins. high by 3 ft. 1½ ins. wide.

Date about 1695–1700. J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

Fig. 359.

CABINET ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

Height, 5 ft. 7½ ins.; width, 3 ft. 7¾ ins.; depth, 1 ft. 8½ ins.

Date about 1675–80. R. Eden Dickson, Esq.

one. In this action of "setting," glue contracts very much, and it is necessary, therefore, that the layer of glue between the panel and the veneer should be squeezed out as thinly as possible. The excess, if allowed to remain, will make an imperfect joint, and cause blisters and bubbles. These blisters are very troublesome to rectify. They cannot be reduced by another application of the hot caul, as a certain amount of air takes the place of the contracted glue, which cannot be squeezed out, as it has no escaping vent. It is necessary to prick the surface, so as to allow the imprisoned air to escape before attempting to reduce blisters by the caul or the hammer. A veneering hammer is in form like a blunted axe, with the head fixed at right angles to the handle instead of in a line with it. The hammer is rarely used for large flat surfaces, as the caul is much more convenient and certain, but for shaped surfaces, especially where there is curvature both ways, as in a "bombé" front, it is indispensable. The veneer to be applied is soaked with hot size, or glue, on each side, both to render it pliable and to facilitate the action of the hammer. The glue must be thin and very hot. The veneer being laid, the hammer is used, from the centre outwards, with a pressure applied with a circular action, the aim being to work the excess glue from the centre to the outside edges. An accurate knowledge of the correct consistencies of the glue, for both the hammer and the caul methods, is indispensable.

Fig. 360.

MIRROR FRAME.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

3 ft. 1 in. high by 2 ft. 8¼ ins. wide. Frame 5½ ins. wide. Cushion-mould 3¾ ins.

Date about 1680–5.

J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

After the panel has been allowed to stand for about thirty hours, the handscrews and the caul can be removed, but the process of "cleaning up" should be deferred for

Fig. 361.

CABINET.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

(Upper part only.)

The coarse style of inlay of *c.* 1690.

Height, 2 ft. 6 ins.; width, 3 ft.; depth, 1 ft. 6 ins. Victoria and Albert Museum.

a week, if possible, as the glue is still soft underneath. With marqueterie-work the inlay and veneer of the ground are rarely of exactly the same thickness, and the thinner of the two will gradually sink as the glue contracts. It is better that this sinking should take place before the panel be cleaned up rather than after, if perfect finish be desired. The " faker " wilfully adopts the bad method of smoothing his work quickly, to obtain the uneven surfaces, and even the blisters so frequently found in genuine old work. To clean up, the protecting paper is first washed, or better still scraped off, irregularities of surface are reduced with a fine toothing plane, and the work is finished with a steel scraper and fine glass-paper. The final process of polishing does not concern us here. In this cleaning up it must be remembered that excessive friction, in producing heat, may soften the underlying glue and thus cause blisters. The work, therefore, must be kept as cool as possible. Especially is this the case with the inlay of brass and tortoise-shell, known as " buhl " or " Boulle."[1] In this work the process of smoothing is generally done with pumice-stone and water to prevent the work from becoming heated.

[1] The name is, of course, derived from Andre Charles Boulle, the famous French *ebeniste*.

Fig. 362.

CABINET ON STAND.

Veneered with patterns of oyster-pieces of laburnum and other woods.

Height, 5 ft. 3½ ins.; width, 3 ft. 4½ ins.; depth, 1 ft. 8½ ins.

Date about 1690. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 363.

CABINET ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut oyster-pieces and inlaid with marqueterie,

6 ft. 3½ ins. high by 4 ft. 8½ ins. wide by 1 ft. 11 ins. deep.

Date about 1685–90.

Fig. 364.

CABINET ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

(The original stretcher and feet are missing.)

Height, 5 ft. 4½ ins.; width, 3 ft. 8 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 8 ins.

Date about 1685–90. Victoria and Albert Museum.

The art of inlaying woods, the one into another, being mastered by the English craftsman, and the concomitant problems of veneering on straight or shaped surfaces being solved at the same time, materials such as ivory or bone, and even metals such as silver or pewter, were used. Coloured effects were obtained by the staining of wood or ivory, as it was found that the colour-range of the woods available was extremely limited. One of the most decorative devices adopted, which became very general among English cabinet-makers, was to cut saplings transversely, that is, in thin slices across the trunk, and to veneer with these "oyster-pieces." As an ornamental method there was a good deal to be said in its favour, but even if constructional principles be strained to include veneering at all, there is no doubt that end-grain wood, such as these transversely cut saplings must be, does not adhere to its bed as efficiently as veneer cut with the grain. In addition to this, these oyster-pieces are, necessarily, exceedingly brittle, and although this tendency to break under the slightest strain is partly obviated when they are glued down, any warping of the bed or inefficient adhering will cause them to fall off in small broken pieces. If these fragments are not preserved and replaced, it is almost impossible to match them, as no two of these sapling-pieces are ever exactly alike in texture-pattern, and any subsequent

Fig. 365.

CABINET ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

Height, 4 ft. 10¾ ins.; width, 3 ft. 4 ins.; depth, 1 ft. 6 ins.

Date about 1690. J. Dupuis Cobbold, Esq.

restoration becomes an unsightly patchwork. Of these oyster-pieces, the sections of walnut, laburnum or lignum-vitæ were the most frequently used, although king-wood and fruit-woods such as apple, plum or cherry are not exceptional. Fig. 355 shows, on a reduced scale, a laburnum oyster-piece with its sap-ring, before being jointed up for veneering. In Figs. 359 and 361, both the inside and outside of the upper and lower doors are entirely veneered with sections of walnut and laburnum, further enriched by an inlay of walnut marqueterie in panels of holly. In Fig. 356 the fronts of the drawers are veneered in the same manner, portions of the outer ring of light-coloured sap-wood being left to enhance the appearance of the oyster rings. The drawers here are edged with a banding of sycamore, but a more usual device was to border panels and drawer fronts with two strips of walnut placed together, with the grain running diagonally, and placed in opposition to produce a "herring-bone"

Fig. 366.
THE CABINET, FIG. 365, SHOWN OPEN.

Fig. 367.

CHEST OF DRAWERS ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

The columnar legs with briquetted shafts are exceptional.

c. 1690. S. Brand, Esq.

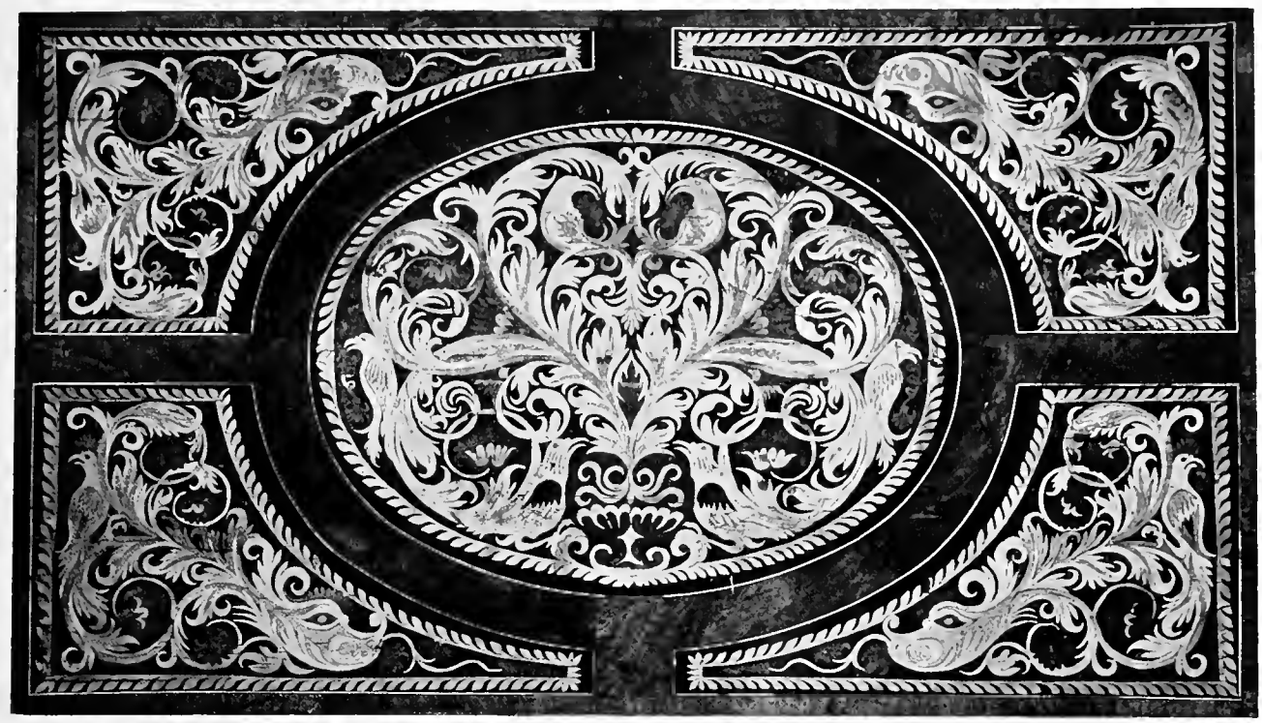


Fig. 368.
THE TOP OF THE CHEST, FIG. 367.

effect. An alternative was to cut the bandings directly across the veneer leaf, a method for which the term " cross-banding " has been coined.

The chest, Fig. 357, which has the appearance of having lost its under stage of legs and stretcher, is veneered with transverse sections of olive and lignum, with a geometrical inlay of box-wood stringing or lines. These lines are gauged to an even thickness by the use of a tool known as a " string-gauge," a small appliance of wood, in shape something like a large tuning-fork. Between the prongs, inside, two small cutters are secured, the one being made adjustable for varying thicknesses of lines. The strings are cut somewhat larger than is actually required, with a cutting-gauge instead of a saw, and they are then drawn between the two cutters until they are reduced to an uniform thickness. These lines, when used in straight lengths, are inserted after the surface is veneered, channels being made with an ordinary movable-headed gauge, furnished with a cutter corresponding to the thickness of the line itself. The stringing is then brushed with glue, rubbed in with the tail-end of an ordinary hammer, and mitred at the corners with a chisel. With stringing such as in the panel-borders of Fig. 358, for example, this method is not practicable, and here the panels have to be cut by the

marqueterie cutter, together with the veneered ground, and the lines bent round the panels when the entire drawer front is pieced together. In the case of ivory lines, to prevent breakage, it is usual to soak them in acetic acid for several days before using.

Had marqueterie originated as a wood-working art in this country, it would be interesting to have traced its development, both technically and decoratively. It comes to England, however, full-blown, as it were, and the variations which do actually take place are merely due to change of fashion or taste, and are, therefore, of little

Fig. 369.

WALNUT TABLE.

Inlaid with marqueterie.

Height, 2 ft. 5 ins.; width, 3 ft. 1 in.; depth, 2 ft. 0½ in

Date about 1675–80. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 370.
THE TOP OF THE TABLE, FIG. 369.

or no use in establishing positive dates. There is one noticeable evolution which takes place after the English craftsman attains a certain degree of skill in the cutting of marqueterie, and that is in the direction of the delicate scrolled inlay, usually of dark wood in a ground of holly or sycamore, the taste for which does not appear to have arisen (that is, if we are to suppose the supply, in this instance, did not create the demand) before the years from 1695 to 1703.

In placing the examples illustrated in the following pages, therefore, in some order, it must be pointed out that the dates given under each are those only of the inception of the fashions of the various styles, but the nationality of the actual makers, and even of the country of origin itself, is frequently very questionable.

There is very little doubt that some of this marqueterie furniture, especially that where the inlay is composed of the leaves and flowers of jessamine cut from white and green-stained ivory, is as early, in England, as the later years of the reign of Charles II. Fig. 359 is a cabinet which may easily date some years prior to 1680 rather than

Fig. 371.

CHEST OF DRAWERS ON STAND.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

Date about 1650. Victoria and Albert Museum.

after, and when it is remembered that oak furniture, as we have seen, was being extensively produced at this period, it is difficult to understand the fashion for the sombre oak running concurrently with this gaudy inlay, other than on the hypothesis that the latter had to be imported from the other side of the North Sea, and therefore was not available to the same degree. The inlay here, apart from its Dutch design, is also sand-burnt on the laurelled bandings surrounding the doors, which indicates a device which could hardly have been known to an English craftsman at this early date. There is a mechanical excellence in the cutting and laying of the veneers, and also a tradition, if only in the possession of the necessary designs, in tracings and prickings, which must render the nationality of this early marqueterie very suspect. Considering the close inter-association which existed between England and Holland at this and

Fig. 372.

CHEST OF DRAWERS.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

c. 1700. Sir Leicester Harmsworth, Bart.

subsequent periods, the question of nationality is not so serious as one would imagine, as we know that timber and veneers were freely imported from the Continent during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and numbers of Dutch woodworkers settled in this country, especially in East Anglia and the counties bounded by the Dover Straits or the estuary of the Thames. Canvey Island was, until recent years, almost entirely a Dutch colony, situated in the mouth of our chief river and within a few miles of the Metropolis.

This early marqueterie falls into sharp divisions. Fashions appear to have been short-lived, whether regulated by English patrons or by the craftsmen themselves. This stained and white ivory inlay ceases abruptly, and is not repeated, even as occasional

Fig. 373.
WALNUT TABLE.
Inlaid with floral marqueterie.
Date about 1680–5. Col. H. H. Mulliner.

Fig. 374.
THE TOP OF THE TABLE, FIG. 373.
3 ft. 3 ins. by 2 ft. 3 ins.

decoration, after about 1685. It was as if the "something new" of the later seventeenth century interdicted anything belonging to the expired fashion. Even in such examples as the convex or "cushion-moulded" mirror frames, such as Fig. 360, where one would imagine that stock inlay, especially that in panels, would have been used up, at a date considerably later than the vogue of the marqueterie itself, the fashion of the moment is usually rigidly followed.

The inlay of the early Orange period is generally in monotone, light wood in dark, and the design a coarse scrolling. Of this manner Fig. 361 is an example. It is to the marqueterie of this kind that the term "seaweed," if it have any meaning at all,—should be applied. Its strong Dutch character will be remarked in the illustration, and the use of pale walnut for the ground veneer serves to emphasise this. The counterpart to this coarse scrolled marqueterie can be found in the early long cases, containing clocks by makers of lesser renown. It is doubtful if the important clockmakers, with the exception, perhaps, of Dan Quare, placed their clocks in marqueterie cases at all.

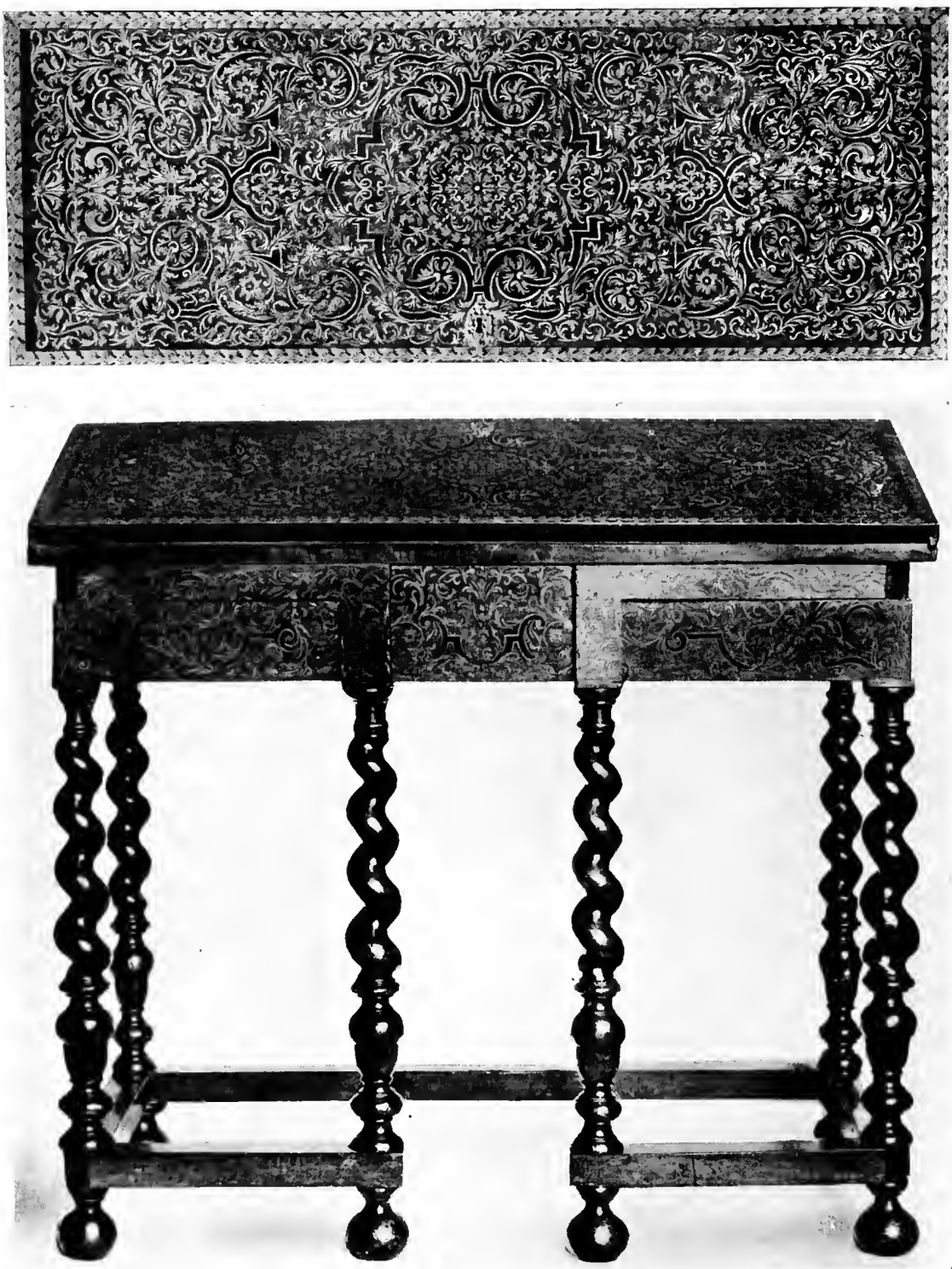


Fig. 375.

WALNUT BUREAU ON STAND.

Inlaid with Arabesque marqueterie.

Date about 1690–5. Col. H. H. Mulliner.

To the same period as this coarse marqueterie belongs the custom of veneering with oyster-pieces in radiating patterns, as in Fig. 362. There is little to be gleaned from the general form of many of these cabinets on spiral-leg stands with shaped swept stretchers. They follow, usually, a set pattern, of a classical cornice surmounting a cushion-moulded frieze (usually containing a drawer opening on the sides), with a frieze-moulding of a bead and fillet. Below this are two doors (at a later stage the whole front is one panel which is hinged at the bottom and falls forward to act as a writing bed), and behind is a collection of drawers, veneered and inlaid to correspond, and a small central cupboard with door. This pattern persists from about 1675 to nearly 1700, with little or no modification, and it is the character of the inlay only which enables the

Fig. 376.

WALNUT TABLE.

Inlaid with marqueterie in ground of holly, banded with walnut oyster-pieces.

Date about 1695. Col. H. H. Mulliner.

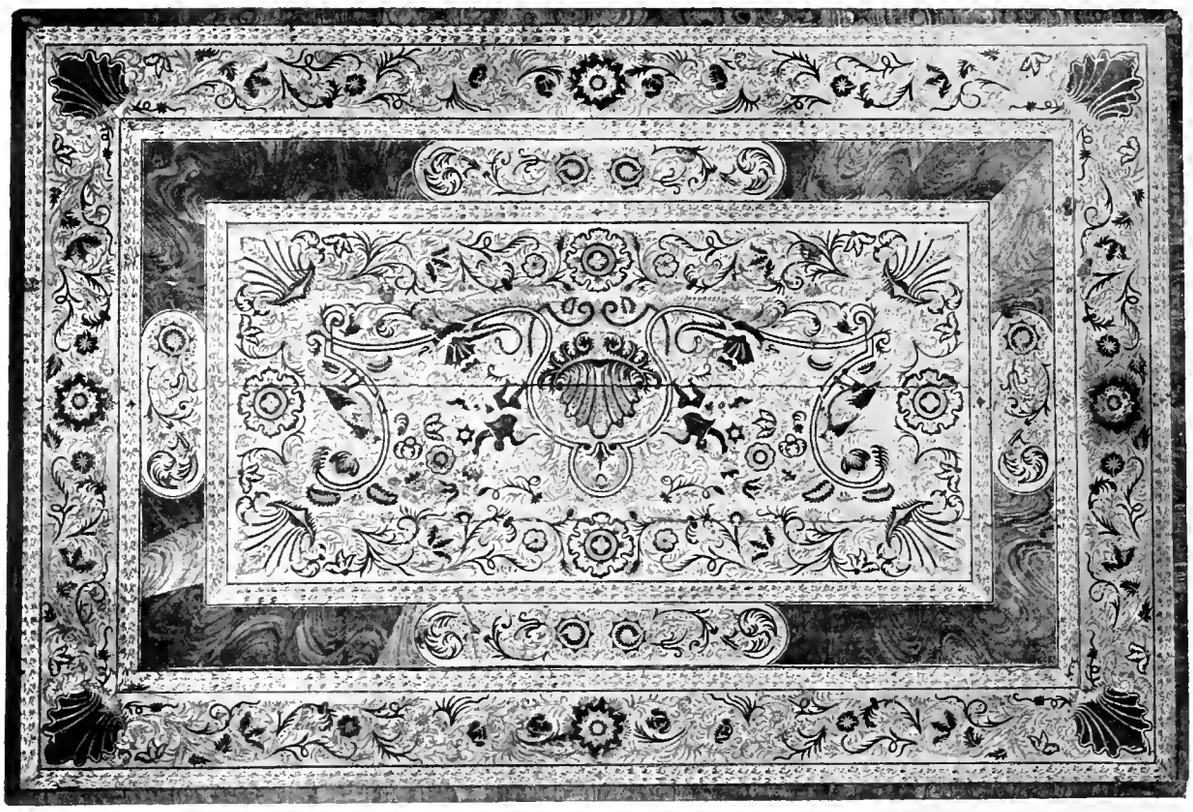


Fig. 377.

THE TOP OF THE TABLE, FIG. 376.

3 ft. 2 ins. by 2 ft. 2 ins.

later to be distinguished from the earlier examples. It will be noticed that in Fig. 362 an ingenious use is made of the sap-rings of the oyster-pieces, in the decorative effect of the entire panel. It would almost appear that the "eye" of the peacock's feather had inspired this elaborate veneering.

The next phase of English marqueterie appears to have been confined to the short reign of James II. Fig. 363 may be given as the type. There is a progression, here, from the earlier centred oval, towards the later "all-over" inlay, although the oval does not appreciably decline in favour until the end of the seventeenth century, but in the later years is more frequently used without marqueterie; oyster-pieces, herring-bone stringing or veneers of exceptional figure or burr being substituted. So rapidly does this taste for marqueterie decline, in certain districts,—probably due to the cost of the work itself placing it beyond the means of any but the wealthy,—that a separate classification of English furniture of this period, that of the plain walnut of William and Mary, might

Fig. 378.

CHINA CABINET.

Veneered with oyster-pieces of walnut and laburnum, and inlaid with marqueterie.

Date about 1695. Viscount Rothermere.

Fig. 379.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE CHINA CABINET, FIG. 378.

The name "Samuel Bennett" is inlaid on the inside of this door and the address "Monmouth Square" on the other.

be attempted, as this walnut furniture of William III differs in many important details, from that of the succeeding reign.

The broad treatment of marqueterie, with centre panels as in Fig. 363, surrounded by others in a wide framing, the inlay sometimes in yellow wood (sycamore or holly), but more often in various colours, was the fashionable manner of 1690–5, and was nearly always used for pieces of important size, such as this cabinet, or for large cupboard presses, of the kind to be found at Burghley and elsewhere. It is with this phase that the characteristic English marqueterie begins, and this statement can be made with considerable confidence, as, apart from the marked difference in massing and general design which these large pieces present (which might have been simply the result

Fig. 380.

TABLE.

Veneered with walnut and inlaid with marqueterie.

Top 3 ft. 3 ins. by 2 ft. 2 ins.

c. 1695. R. W. Wright, Esq.

of a new taste in the importation of pieces) it is with this work that the English marqueterie cutter begins to show his 'prentice hand, in such technical details as the cutting (and designing) of panels in the one piece, the cutting of marqueterie and ground separately (resulting in an absence of the mechanical accuracy so noticeable in the earlier work), and the laying of veneers with hot glue, with such consequences as the splitting and warping referred to at an earlier stage of this chapter.

The earlier form of smaller cabinet with cushion-moulded frieze still persisted even into the first years of the eighteenth century, but in the marqueterie pieces there is a marked change in the use of floral forms, the carnation being a favourite motive. A comparison of Fig. 364 with Fig. 359 will show the difference in the character of this later inlay more clearly than it can be pointed out here. The solid base of Fig. 364 is a subsequent addition, the usual finish of these later cabinets being still a stretchering as in Fig. 359, but of more intricate shaping. These cabinets on spiral-leg stands have nearly always three, in rare instances, four, balusters on the front and only two at the back. That this may have been a source of weakness, especially with a heavy cabinet, such as Fig. 363, is probable, and may account for the presence of the two plain turned legs in that example, not connected to the stretcher, being added at a later date.

Fig. 381.
CABINET ON STAND.
Inlaid with marqueterie.

Fig. 365 is a good specimen of all-over marqueterie of about 1690, the inlay of box, holly, plane, king and rosewood, slightly shaded, and of fine quality, both from the point of design or technical execution. Fig. 366 shows the cabinet open. Behind the central door are mirrors,

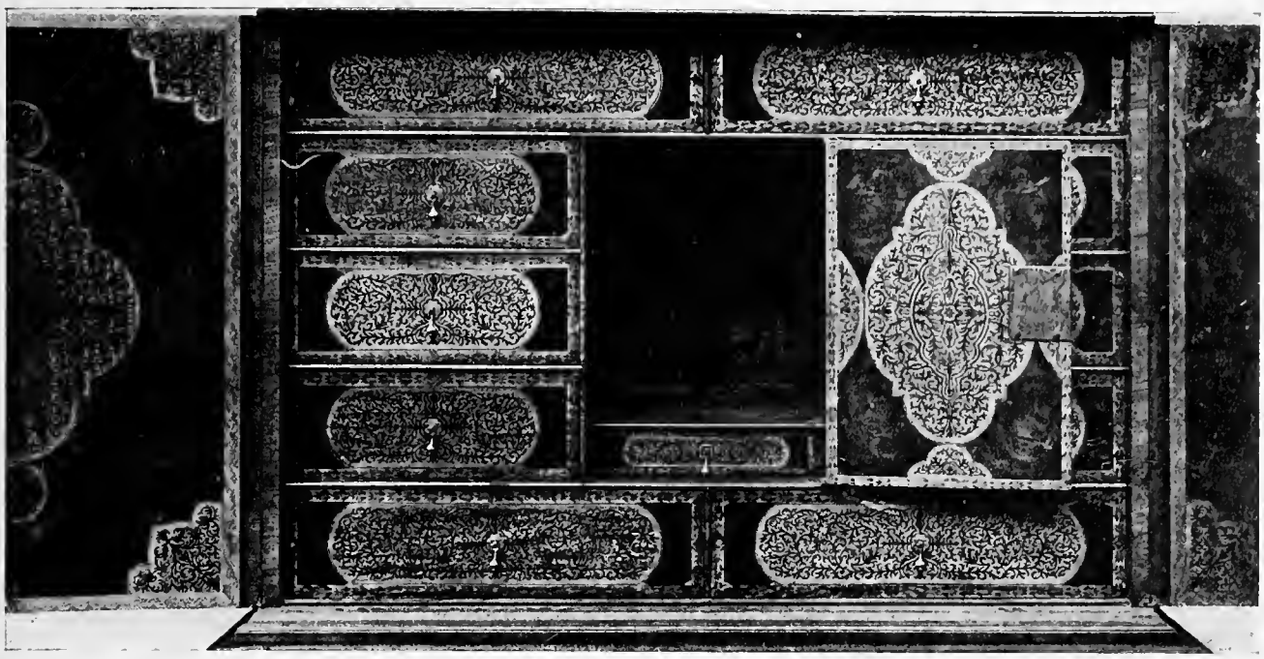


Fig. 382.
THE INTERIOR OF THE CABINET, FIG. 381.

intended to give an effect of depth and perspective when the door is opened. This device is more usual in lacquer cabinets than in marqueterie, and was copied from the ebony pieces of Italian make which found their way to England at this date. The twisted legs have gilded caps and bases, and the stretcher is unusually thick. Cabinets of this kind appear to have been the production of East Anglia almost exclusively (in fact, even at the present day they are rarely found in the Midlands or the West), and considering the numbers of Dutch merchants and others who had settled in Norfolk and Suffolk at this date, especially in Norwich, Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds, the strong Dutch character which many of these pieces exhibit can be easily understood.

Fashions in marqueterie of the last decade of the seventeenth century do not appear to be confined so much to periods as to localities, that is, if we are not to assume the entire production of these expensive pieces to have been chaotic. It would, perhaps, be nearer to the truth to say that the distinction was even finer than one of districts, and that the strong similarity between certain pieces, in the designing of the inlay, is due, very often, to one man or one workshop. It is unlikely that master patterns would be duplicated, or that prickings from these patterns would be sold or given away to other makers. The panels in the front of Fig. 367 and the top, shown in Fig. 368,

offer an interesting instance of this duplication. The four tiers of drawers being graduated in depth, four distinct patterns must have been required for the drawer fronts alone, the frieze of the stand being a duplicate of the top stage. This inlay of birds is a very familiar one, being found in the marqueterie furniture of this period too frequently to be merely a whim of a popular fashion. The panels in these pieces are not copies ; they are duplicates, cut from the same pattern. Mr. Percy Macquoid illustrates two examples, in Fig. 40 and Plate IV of "*The Age of Walnut,*" where the patterns are identical, the one being the reversed counterpart of the other. Both are very similar to, although not exactly the same in design, as Fig. 367. Even if this duplication, in original and counterpart (which is by no means exceptional in this bird-marqueterie) were not sufficient to establish a common source for both, there is the evidence of the woods themselves, which settles, finally, that in some examples which have been carefully examined, the grain of the counterpart ground exactly matches the original inlay, proving beyond question

Fig. 383.

OAK BUREAU.

Veneered with holly and inlaid with fine scroll marqueterie.
Date about 1690–5. Viscount Rothermere.

not only that the two must have been made in the same shop and by the same man, but they must both have been cut at the one time.

There are numerous evidences of this common origin to be found in English furniture, at all periods from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, but in no instance, other than in this inlay of the Orange period, can the fact be stated so irrefutably.

In this chest, Fig. 367, the inlay is in two woods, a rich yellow and a reddish brown, in a figured walnut ground. The legs have square caps of almond wood, and the lower part of the shafts is veneered with a rich yellow wood cut to simulate the coursing of brickwork ; an exceptional and very charming detail.

During the years from 1675 to 1695 the favourite pattern of small table was one on four twisted legs with bun-feet, tied by a serpentine stretcher, centred in an oval or a circle. The tops are usually made from straight pine, in narrow sections, edged with cross-grained walnut, moulded to a thumb section. Every variety of marqueterie, from the ivory jessamine flowers and leaves to the finely scrolled, can be found in these

Fig. 384.

THE BUREAU, FIG. 383, SHOWN OPEN.

tables. Frequently the back is inlaid to correspond with the front, showing that they were made to stand away from a wall. Fig. 369 is an example of about 1675-80, with marqueterie of choice design, especially in the laurelled bandings, and with the central oval of the top not connected to the outer banding with ribs, as in Fig. 368. Fig. 371 is one of the ornate chests on stretchered stands with shaft-turned legs, similar in character to Fig. 369, and of about the same date. It is only towards the end of the century when these inlaid chests begin again to be made in the older fashion, without stands. They vary considerably in quality, the appeal being, evidently, to a wider

Fig. 385.

WALNUT VENEERED TABLE.

Inlaid with scroll-marqueterie of dark wood in panelled grounds of holly.

Date about 1690–5. Col. H. H. Mulliner.

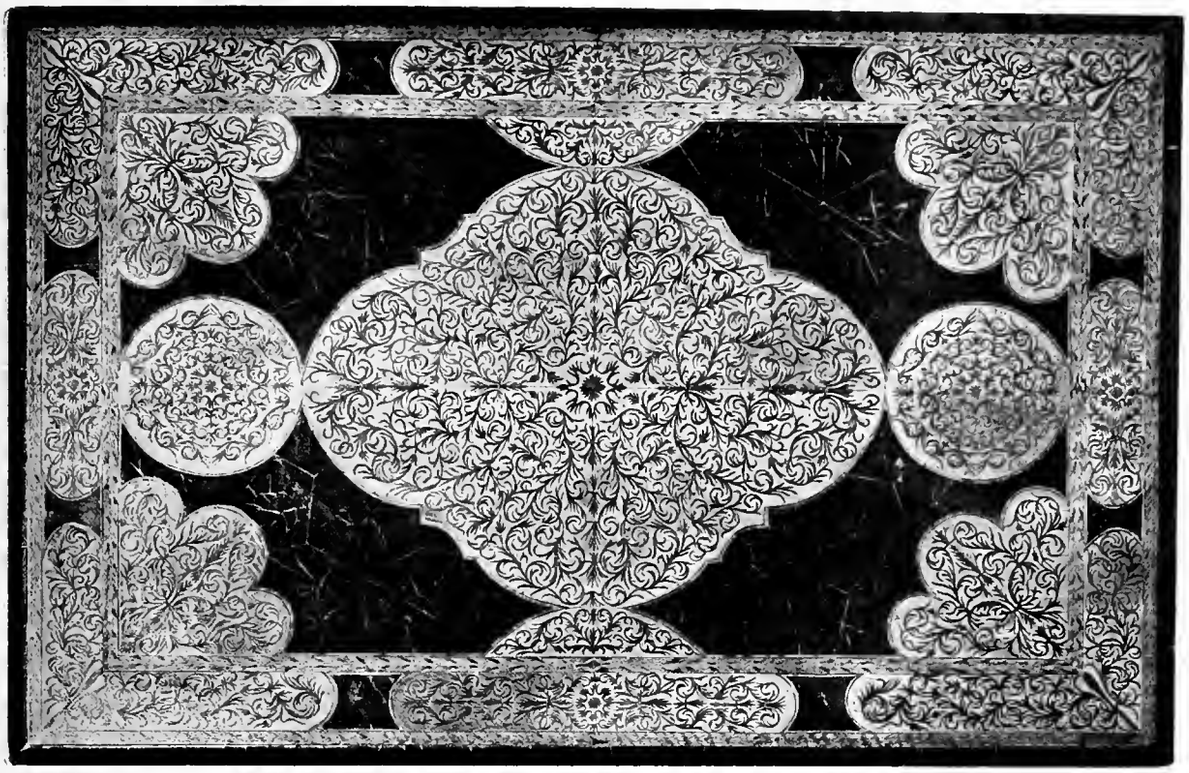


Fig. 386.

THE TOP OF THE TABLE, FIG. 385.

Walnut scroll marqueterie in panels of holly inlaid in grounds of walnut oyster-pieces.
3 ft by 1 ft. 11 ins.

market than before. Fig. 372 is one of these, veneered with simple marqueterie in panels, and with the ornamental brass escutcheons of the time.

As a variation from the more usual spiral-turning, tables and cabinets began to be made, after about 1680, with legs in the form of an S or a double-C. These legs were usually inlaid on the outer edges, more rarely on the sides also. Figs. 373 and 374 show one of these tables, very fine in design, but with the marqueterie cut in a separate operation from its ground, and with the consequent tendency to slight inaccuracy which distinguishes the cutting of England from that of Holland. The table was formerly at Parham Park, the Sussex seat of Lord Zouche of Haryngworth. The veneers, especially those of the top, have bleached with the action of sunlight.

From the same collection, which, although not extensive, is remarkably rich in fine examples, comes also the charming desk, illustrated here in Fig. 375. The marqueterie is a closely designed intricate pattern of arabesques in light and dark woods, cut with great exactness, and in quarters, pieced together and banded with

laurelled borders. Numbers of these desks, with sloping hinged tops supported on pin-hinged pull-out legs, were made during the latter years of the reign of William III, but they are exceedingly rare with marqueterie inlay. They were superseded, shortly before 1700, by the bureau with drawers below, of the kind shown in Fig. 383. The interiors of these bureaux and desks are nearly always as elaborate as the exterior surfaces, finely ornamented with marqueterie everywhere. They were pieces, evidently, only made for important patrons.

A much more delicate form of arabesque inlay, of black wood in holly, can be seen in the exceptionally fine table, Figs. 376 and 377. This represents in design and execution, the high-watermark of English marqueterie and shows to what perfection the art had been brought in England, within a narrow period of less than twenty years. It is not only the progression in point of technical excellence which is so

Fig. 387.

BUREAU CABINET.

Veneered with elm burrs and inlaid with stringing and marqueterie.

See Fig. 388 for interior view.

Date about 1700.

C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

Fig. 388.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE CABINET, FIG. 387.

Showing the door open and the signature, "Samuel Bennett London Fecit" inlaid at the base of the pilasters.

The interior of the bureau is exceptionally choice.

C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

remarkable ; the growth of taste in the designer, the restraint and judicious assorting of the woods is no less noteworthy.

The last phase of English marqueterie which, however advanced it may be as an example of patient execution, yet indicates the decadence of the art itself, is the fine scrolled inlay of 1695–1700. It is in these pieces where we see the marqueterie cutter a supreme master of his craft. So delicate is some of this work that it is difficult to imagine that it is composed of the one wood, cut with a saw, and inlaid in another. The effect is rather that of wax-filled engraving. In Figs. 378 and 379 two views are given of a most remarkable china case, covered with finely-scrolled marqueterie on the outer and inner surfaces of the doors, on the ends and even on the rounded edges of the shelves, which have a sand-burnt laurelling cut in very stout veneers. The cornice and the base are beautifully carved, all from cross-grain walnut. The upper doors, inside and out, are veneered with closely pieced small laburnum oyster-pieces, the lower doors, where the surfaces are larger, being covered with walnut cut in the same way. The maker of this case has signed his name on the inside of the upper doors, " Samuel Bennett " on the one, and " Monmouth Square "[1] on the other. The fronts of the drawers are rebated at the ends to cover the dividing styles, only two small beads being allowed to project to mark the division line between the three drawers. The carcase-work throughout is of pine, now painted a dark dull green. This is specifically a china cabinet, as the ends are glazed, and must have been made to contain some of the rare Oriental porcelains which were sparingly imported at this period.

Fig. 380 is a table of similar date and style, with the C-scrolled legs before referred to, surmounted by carved female heads supporting the framing of the table on tasselled cushions. These carved heads, the projecting rosettes at the bottom of the legs, and the feet, are all silvered, and may have been originally covered with a golden lacquer.

To what degree of elaboration this finely scrolled marqueterie was carried is shown by the cabinet, Fig. 381, and its interior, Fig. 382. Such lavish use of marqueterie veneers was by no means exceptional. The bureau, Figs. 383 and 384, is another instance, as every surface, including even the edges or fillets, has the same scrolled inlay. The carcase work of this piece is of quartered English oak. Both handles and escutcheons are original. This form of bureau, consisting of an upper part in the form of a desk with overhanging ends, is of the seventeenth-century type. During the reign of Anne it was

[1] Monmouth Square was the old name for Soho Square. It contained the town house of the Duke of Monmouth until after the date of Sedgmoor.

usual to make the entire end in the one piece. Occasionally a boldly-projecting moulding was mitred round the front and sides in place of this overhang. This is the alternative method of constructing these bureaux of the William III period. They are decorative pieces, whether in marqueterie or in walnut, and are now rare, especially when inlaid.

The table, Figs. 385 and 386, may be accepted as the final development of this scrolled marqueterie of walnut in holly panels. A close inspection of the top in the illustration will show how the inlay has been designed to allow of cutting in four sections at the one operation.

It is possible that architects, who were beginning to intrude into the sphere of furniture-designing, and whose influence became very marked in the years from 1720 to 1745, may have been responsible for the decline of marqueterie, with the creation of which they could have had little concern. The extraordinary bureau cabinet shown here in Figs. 387 and 388, which may be taken as bridging the marqueterie and plain walnut furniture of 1700, has enough of the classical element, in the scrolled pediment and the pilasters flanking the doors, to suggest that it is not entirely the unaided creation of the cabinet-maker. The veneer everywhere is a finely figured, or pollarded elm, of a rich golden brown shade. The trussed corners of the "bombé" lower part, and the frieze and base of the upper stage, are the only portions which are decorated with marqueterie. On the inside of the door the pilasters of the outside are imitated in inlay and cross-banding, and on the bases again recurs the name of the Soho cabinet-maker, "Samuel Bennett, London, Fecit," in the manner of the early makers of long-case clocks. Apart from its missing akroter, the cabinet is in fine preservation, and of superb quality. That a maker of thirty years previously would have opened a door in this manner, bringing with it the side pilasters and the frieze above, is doubtful. This detail appears to indicate the existence of a foreign element, in the designing of furniture of this date, of which many evidences will be found when the later furniture of the periods of Anne and the first two Georges is considered in a subsequent book. With this bureau cabinet, carrying us, as it does, to the close of the seventeenth century, this chapter can be brought to a logical conclusion, leaving the furniture of the eighteenth century, together with its woodwork, to form the subject-matter of another work.

Chapter VI.

Domestic Clocks.

THE late seventeenth and eighteenth-century long-case and bracket clocks are such integral features of the English furniture of their period, and their acquirement offers such a fascinating and profitable field to the collector, that some mention and description of them is necessary, if this book is to be comprehensive. At the outset one is confronted with the difficulty of having written an exhaustive book on the same subject, and the problem is how to condense the information and illustrative material contained in a royal quarto volume of 354 pages into the space of a single chapter, without omitting something of prime importance to the student of English horology. It is obvious that a good deal of excision is necessary, and, at the outset, space will forbid anything beyond a very brief mention of the clock movements or the historical development of the clockmaker's craft.

The collecting of English domestic clocks appears, at the present day, to be reinforced by very inadequate knowledge. Fine examples, and the merest rubbish,—the work of the later eighteenth-century country makers unfortunately offers a great number of specimens of the latter,—appear to command indiscriminate prices, sometimes absurdly high, at other times as ridiculously low.

A poor clock in a case of little or no merit is a worthless thing, and if a greater knowledge of the subject has the effect of enhancing the prices of the fine clocks, and of rendering the rubbish absolutely unsaleable, a real benefit will have been conferred on the discriminating collector.

English long-case clocks may be divided into several periods, or classes, each of which is, to a great extent, quite distinct. To commence with, we have the very early thirty-hour long-case clocks, generally in ebony-veneered, or ebonised panelled cases, or in walnut, inlaid with simple stringing or marqueterie. These clocks are one-handed, the motion-work of the minute-hand being imperfectly understood at that date. Clocks of this kind date from about 1660 to 1672, but it must not be imagined that every thirty-hour single-handed clock is an early one. They were made, principally as hanging wall clocks, during the whole of the eighteenth century, in the smaller provincial towns or villages, and they are usually to be found, divorced from their original wall brackets,

and married to crude long cases, generally of waxed oak. The early clocks have always square dials, and these are never more than about 10 ins. in width and height. A 1660–70 one-handed clock would be, almost certainly, from a London maker, and would be signed with his name in a straight line at the bottom of the dial, and usually in Latin, thus "Johannes Fromanteel, Londini, fecit."

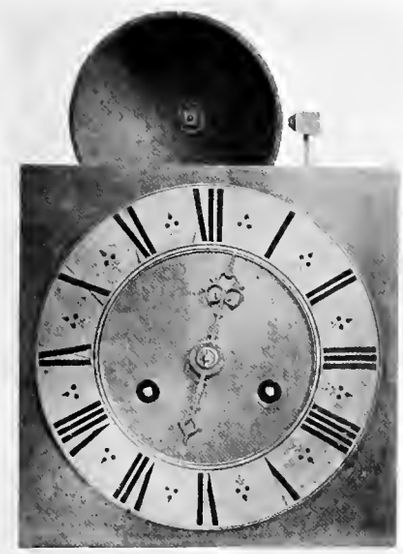


Fig. 389.
THE DIAL OF FIG. 390.

Fig. 391.
EXAMPLE OF A ONE-HANDED SQUARE DIAL CLOCK OF LATE PERIOD.

(1740–50.)

For the purpose of a better understanding of this subject, without entering more than is absolutely necessary into the technicalities of the movements, we can examine and describe the visible component parts of a long-case clock, and briefly state the various stages of evolution from 1660 to 1800. The still earlier lantern — or "Cromwellian"—hanging clocks, being the progenitors of the long-case, demand also some brief reference. It is necessary to touch on the technical side of our subject and to examine the mechanism which causes a clock to go and keep time. The motive power of a long-case clock is the fall of weights, suspended from pulley-wheels channelled to carry the gut lines which are coiled on barrels when the clock is wound up. To these barrels the winding squares, which can be seen in the winding holes on the dial face,

Fig. 390.
"JOHANNES FROMANTEEL, LONDINI."

30-hour Striking Clock.
Ebonised case.
6 ft. 8 ins. high. Waist 10 ins. wide.
Dial 8⅞ ins. square.
Date about 1660–5.

are attached, and the winding key turns these squares and the barrels at the same time, thus coiling the gut lines and lifting the weights. The barrels are cogged, and a spring-ratchet allows the barrel to turn the one way only, thus preventing the line from running down with its weight when the winding-key is removed. The right-hand barrel is usually for the going, the left for the striking respectively.[1] The collection of wheels attached to each is known as the "going train" and "striking train" respectively. It is unnecessary here to enter into an elaborate explanation as to how and why a clock goes and records time, as this has been fully described in the larger book "*English Domestic Clocks*" before referred to.

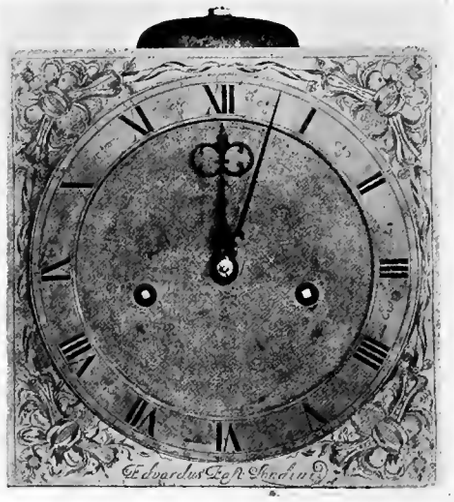


Fig. 392.
"EDUARDUS EAST, LONDINI."
9-in. Dial of 8-day Striking Clock.
Date about 1665.

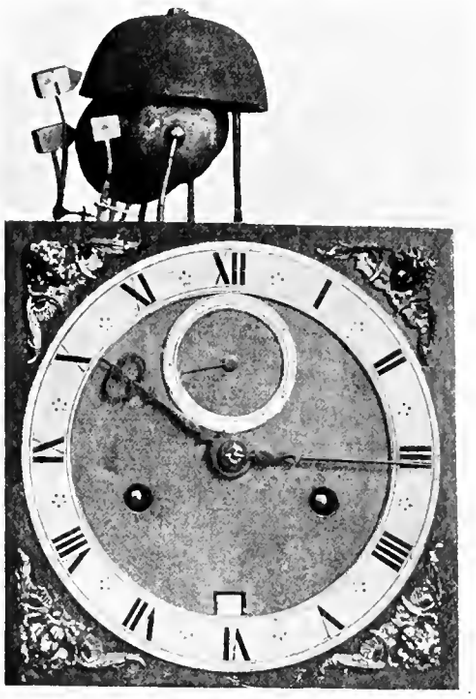
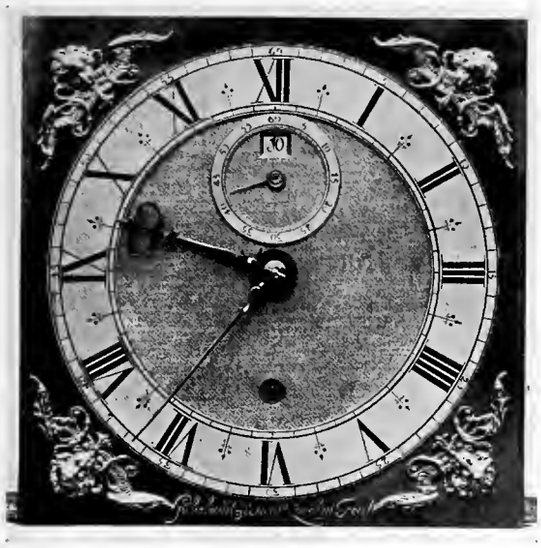


Fig. 393.
"GULIELMUS CLEMENT, LONDINI, FECIT."
8-in. Dial of 8-day Quarter-striking Clock.
1¼-seconds Pendulum.
Date about 1675.
Henry T. Brice, Esq.

It is obvious, however, that if the fall of the going weight is the driving force of the clock, some uniform check must be placed on this fall so that it shall take eight days, a month, or some regular period to accomplish its descent to the full length of the gut line. The eighteenth-century long-case clocks have usually a period of eight days, between windings, that is, in technical parlance, the train is one of four wheels from main wheel to the escapement, but month and even year clocks were made by the noted makers.

The check on the fall of the driving weight is the escapement and the pendulum. The fastest wheel, and therefore the most easily controlled, is at the other end of the train to the gut-wound barrel, and is known as the escape-wheel. This is toothed, and is engaged by two checks attached to the pendulum, which in its swing alternately

[1] In some complicated clocks, especially those with three trains, this rule does not always apply.



Figs. 394 and 395.

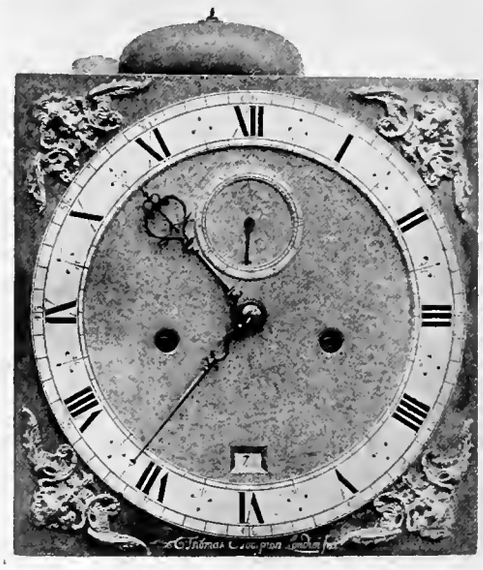
WILLIAM CLEMENT, LONDON.

(Gulielmus Clement, Londini, Fecit.)

Month Clock, Non-striking.
1¼-seconds pendulum. (61.155 ins. in length.)
Bolt-and-shutter maintaining power.
Water gilt dial.
Oak case veneered with burr walnut.
Sliding hood, supported on spiral click-spring.
Height of case, 6 ft. 6 ins.
10-in. dial.
Date about 1675.

D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

engages one and then the other of these checks in the teeth of the escape wheel, allowing one tooth to escape, and the wheel to revolve thus far with each swing. At the same time, the pendulum receives an impulse from the crutch attached to the escapement which carries it on to its next swing. The clock, therefore, is regulated by the time the pendulum takes to oscillate, and this is a fixed quantity depending on one circumstance only. Stated in exact language, a pendulum with a length of 39·1393 ins. from the exact bending point of the steel suspension at the top to the centre of gravity of the entire



Figs. 396 and 397.

THOMAS TOMPION, LONDON.

(Thomas Tompion, Londini, Fecit.)

8-day Striking Clock; water-gilt dial.
Finely pierced and carved hands.
Oak case veneered with burr walnut.
Carved cresting to hood. Slide-up hood.
6 ft. 9 ins. high. 9½-in. dial.

Date about 1680.

D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

pendulum, has a swing occupying one second of time to accomplish, no matter whether the arc be wide or narrow. The clock, therefore, merely registers, in seconds, minutes or hours, the number of the oscillations of its pendulum. In long-case clocks, where the pendulum is of seconds' length or longer, and where the arc of swing is restricted by the inside width of the case, and has to be narrow in consequence, the escape-wheel is placed vertically, and what is known as the "anchor" escapement,—sometimes as the "recoil,"—is adopted. In bracket-clocks, where the pendulum is short, and the degree of swing immaterial, the escape-wheel, especially in early examples, is

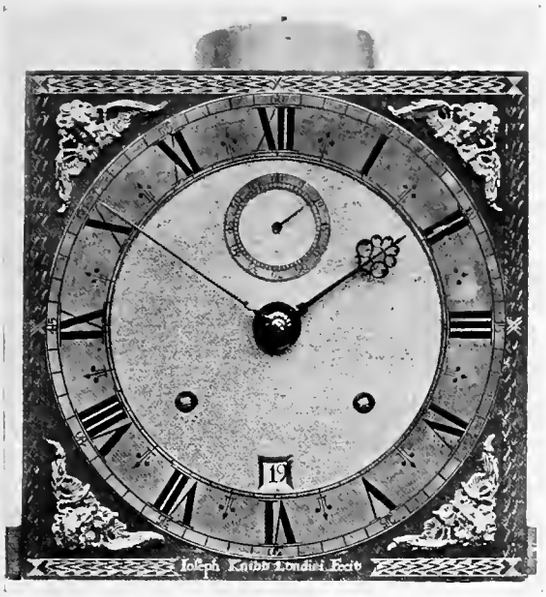


Fig. 398 and 399.

JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.

(Joseph Knibb, Londini, Fecit.)

Month Striking Clock, striking on two bells on Roman numeral system (see text). Hour and minute circles solid silver. Water-gilt dial and corner pieces. Exceptionally delicate hands. Oak case veneered with ebony in raised panels.

6 ft. 8 ins. high. 10-in. dial.

Date about 1695.

D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

usually placed horizontally, the rod or "arbor" attached to the pendulum having two checks, which engage, in turn, with the teeth of the escape. This is known as the "crown-wheel" or "verge" escapement. The difference in the motive power between the bracket clock and the long-case is, that in the former there is no room for the fall of weights, and a spiral spring is placed in the barrel, which is coiled up when the clock is wound, and uncoils, gradually, as the clock runs down. The barrel is connected with its "fusee" by a gut line, and the function of the fusee is to equalise the pull of the spring, which would otherwise be more

Fig. 400.

JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.

8-day Clock. Oak case veneered with ebony, brass capitals and bases to hood; water gilt.
6 ft. 2 ins. high.
Date about 1675.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

powerful when fully wound than when nearly run down. (See Chapter IV, "*English Domestic Clocks.*")

With this brief explanation we can dismiss the clock mechanism, and turn to the visible part, the dial. The earliest long-case dials up to about 1715–20 are always square, measuring 10 ins. in the very early examples, 11 ins. up to about 1700, and from thence to about 1720, 12 ins. After about 1720 the arch dial comes into fashion, the square form being made only by small country makers. The arched dials vary from 12 ins. across to as much as 18 ins. in the case of the gigantic Yorkshire clocks.

In the attempt to give a rational account of English domestic clocks, and one which shall be of value to the collector, it is only possible to illustrate those specimens which are representative of their fashion or period. It would be both a waste of time, and highly misleading, to describe those examples which are merely late repetitions of early types, although it must not be forgotten, that, especially in the case of long-case clocks, such specimens abound, the work of small provincial makers working in a bygone fashion. With this stipulation in mind, we can proceed to our examination of the dials of long-case clocks of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

Types of Long-Case Clock Dials

Fashions in long-case clock dials do not appear to have obtained until about 1670. Fig. 389 is a Fromanteel dial of about 1660–5, and is, perhaps, the very earliest type which was made. The clock, being one-handed,—having no minute-hand motion-work,—has the hour circle divided into quarters on its inside edge, with no minute divisions on the outside. The spandrels of the dial are without any ornamentation, and the hand is a development from the simple spade-form of the earlier lantern-clock. See p. 341 for illustrations of lantern-clock hands. The clock is a thirty-hour—a train of three—but with a key-winding action and a striking train. Fig. 390 shows the clock case itself, of simple panelled form, ebony veneered on oak, with the capitals

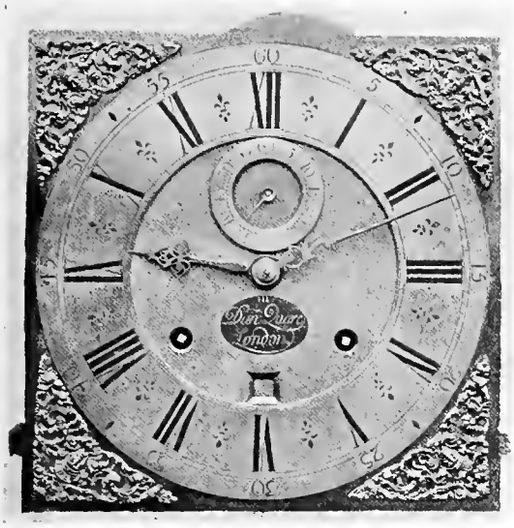


Fig. 401.

Figs. 401 and 402.

DAN QUARE, LONDON.

Month Striking Clock. 2 bells. Striking on the Roman numeral system as in Figs. 399 and 406. 12-in. dial.

Date about 1695–1700.

James Stuttard, Esq.

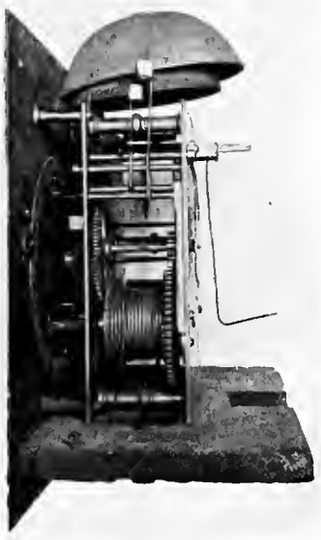


Fig. 402.

and bases of the columns, on either side of the hood, silvered. As a comparison Fig. 391 shows the late single-handed dial of a thirty-hour clock of about 1740–50, which has, in many respects, the appearance of an early example. With these late degenerate types, however, the details are a mere jumble, and the latest characteristics establish the date. Thus in this specimen the pierced hand is of the 1730–40 pattern, if we disregard the projecting tail on the other side of the collet, and the brass spandrel-corners are even later. The clock has no visible winding-holes, and is, therefore, wound by pulling up the weights by cords or chains, in the old lantern-clock style; an infallible sign, in a long-case clock, of a degenerate type. It is a depraved example, and is only illustrated here to show the differences between an early clock and one of later date but apparently early character. It is hardly necessary to point out that these clocks are worthless to the collector.

An early dial, which is quite typical of its period is illustrated in Fig. 392. The spandrel corners are engraved—a fashion which preceded that of the separately attached brass corner-pieces—and the hour circle is narrow, the numerals squat, and the minute divisions are on the extreme outer edge of the circle. This latter detail is an almost infallible indication of an early clock. The hour-hand is finely pierced and carved, the dial centre beautifully "matted," and the exact attention bestowed, by the leading makers, on apparently trifling details is shown by the fact that the two hands just reach their relative devisions on the circle, the quarters on the inside and the minutes on the outside, without trenching a fraction of an inch beyond. The clock is an eight-day

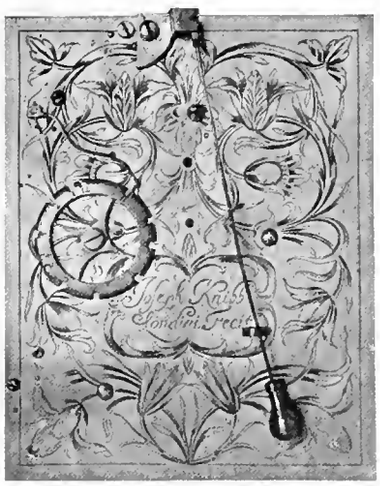


Fig. 403.
BACK PLATE OF MOVEMENT.

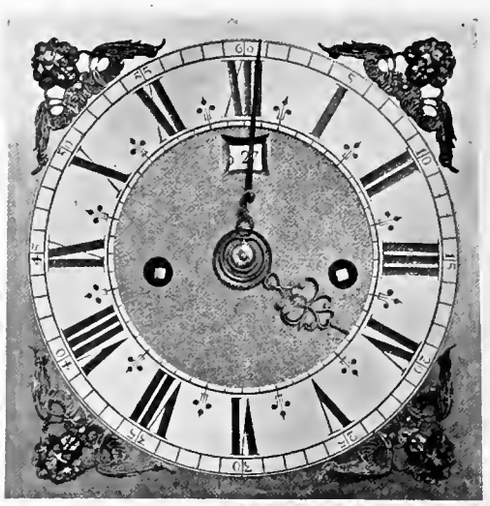


Fig. 404.
DIAL OF CLOCK.

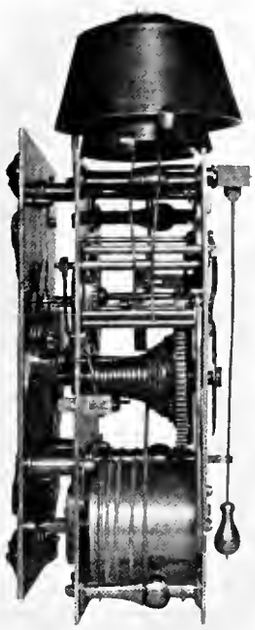


Fig. 405
SIDE VIEW OF MOVEMENT.

Fig. 406.

Figs. 403 to 406.
JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.

8-day Ebony Bracket Clock.
Striking on 2 bells in the Roman numeral fashion.
Date about 1695.

Richard Arnold, Esq.

striker, and the dial has the simple refined character which is inseparable from a fine early specimen. Edward East was a noted maker, the Court Horologist to Charles II.

The next example, Fig. 393, illustrates the next development, the provision of a subsidiary dial to mark the swings of the pendulum, or, in the case of a pendulum of seconds length—39·1393 ins.—the seconds themselves. In this clock the pendulum is of $1\frac{1}{4}$ seconds length—61·155 ins.—and the subsidiary dial, although numbered from 1 to 60, has only four divisions between each numbering of 5, 10, 15 and so on. The engraved corners, as in the East dial, are here replaced by brass-winged cherub heads, and in early clocks, by renowned makers, these corners will always be found finely chased, and frequently water-gilt. This clock is by William Clement,—the first maker who adopted the "anchor" escapement,—and the name is signed "Gulielmus Clement, Londini, Fecit," across the bottom of the dial, in the usual fashion of that date. I am indebted to Mr. Malcolm Webster for permission to use this photograph again,—it is illustrated in Fig. 84 of "*English Domestic Clocks*,"—and also the four preceding examples in this chapter.

William Clement's dials are always characterised by quiet refinement of style. From Mr. Wetherfield's unique collection the next example is taken, in character very similar to Fig. 393. Both have the long 61-inch, $1\frac{1}{4}$ seconds length pendulum, the subsidiary dial having forty-eight divisions only. Fig. 394 differs from Fig. 393 in being a month movement, and possessing the maintaining-power of the kind known as the bolt-and-shutter. Some descriptive detail may be of service here. In the matter of duration between windings, we know that an eight-day clock, with a seconds pendulum,—i.e. 39·1393 ins. in length,—has a train of four wheels from main to escape. Clock wheels are geared together by means of teeth and pinions,

Fig. 407.
JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.
Month Striking Clock with skeleton dial. 6 ft. 8 ins. high. 10-in. dial. Date about 1685–95.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

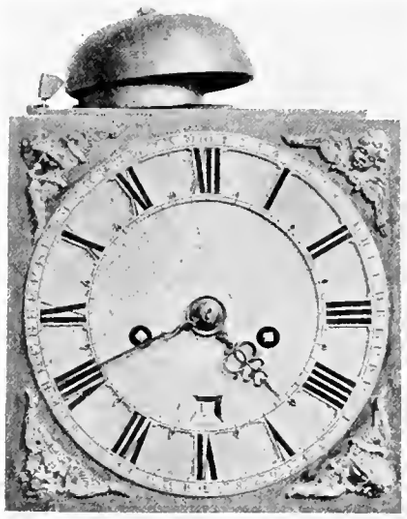


Fig. 408.
JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.
8-day, 2-bell Striking Bracket Clock, with skeleton, minute-numbered dial.
Date about 1685.

the former, on the periphery of the wheel, engaging with the latter, attached horizontally to its "arbor" or shaft. A wheel-motion, therefore, from left to right, communicates itself to the next in order, in the opposite direction. This is apparent to anyone acquainted with cog-and-pinion, or cog-to-cog gearing, and must be evident to the untechnical on a moment's thought. We see, therefore, that the seconds finger, which is attached directly to the arbor of the escape-wheel, must move with it, and in the same direction, and this motion must be from left to right. The next, or third wheel, therefore, moves from right to left, the next, the centre wheel, from left to right, and the last, or main wheel, from right to left again. To the arbor of this main wheel the winding square of the going train is attached, and in winding we merely reverse the going of the wheel, compensating for a fall of eight days of the gut line from which the weight depends, by some ten or twelve turns of the winding-key from *left to right*. Now with a month clock there is an additional wheel, between the centre and main wheels, to provide the extra gearing for the additional duration, and one wheel at one end of the train must have its motion reversed. We cannot reverse the escape wheel, as a seconds finger moving round its dial from right to left would look absurd, therefore it must be the main wheel which must have this reverse motion, and, in winding, the key must be turned from *right to left*, instead of the usual left to right as in the case of an eight-day clock with a seconds pendulum. This is a rough-and-ready method of detecting a month-clock, but this will not apply to a clock with a pendulum shorter than seconds length, as the going train may, and probably does, consist of a greater or lesser number of wheels than four, and the absence of a seconds dial and finger removes the objection to the escape-wheel having a reverse motion.

The second point to be explained is the maintaining-power device before alluded to. It must be obvious that as the motive power of a clock, of the kind we are considering, consists in the fall of a weight, when we wind the clock we lift this weight with the winding-key, and the power is temporarily removed. A long pendulum will usually swing through this period by its own momentum, but the clock, especially if it be finely

adjusted, will not keep time during the period of the winding. The margin of error will be very slight, but the old clockmakers prided themselves on the accuracy of their clocks, and to overcome this defect the maintaining power was adopted. This provides a pulling-string or a depressing lever, putting in operation a spring, which acts on the going train, thereby driving the clock by spring-power during the period while the driving weight is being lifted on the winding-key. To ensure that this spring-power shall be used without any option on the part of the person winding the clock, shutters are provided in front of the winding-holes—which in some measure protect the clock from dust—and these shutters can only be opened for the winding of the clock by putting the maintaining power into action, either by pulling a string or depressing a lever. In Fig. 394 the winding square is hidden by this shutter. (The clock, being a non-striker, has only the one winding-hole.) The dial measures 10 ins. square, and the train has been "planted" to occupy part of the space which would have been required for a striking train. Fig. 395 shows the clock in its case, the latter being of oak veneered with burr walnut. The hood has no door, and is made with grooves in the back to slide up for winding, a click-spring being provided to hold the hood up during this operation. This is the usual device with early long-case clocks.

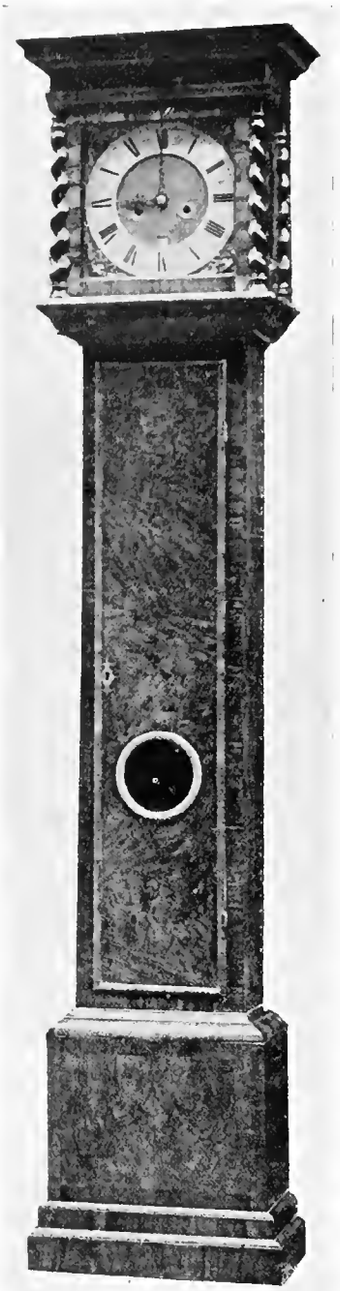


Fig. 409.
AN EXAMPLE OF A SQUARE-DIAL CLOCK IN A VENEERED WALNUT CASE OF GOOD PROPORTIONS AND WITH ITS CORRECT BASE.
1700 type.

Fig. 396 is a Tompion dial of the same early date, measuring only $9\frac{1}{2}$ ins. square, and with the refined narrow hour ring of that period. The hands are exceptionally delicate, and the dial-plate is water-gilt, in a similar manner to the Clement dial, Fig. 394. Fig. 397 shows the case, of simple burr-walnut veneer, the only extra embellishment being the carved cresting to the hood. It will be observed that these early clocks, of superfine quality, were rarely put into elaborate cases. I do not think that Thomas Tompion ever had a marqueterie case made for any of his

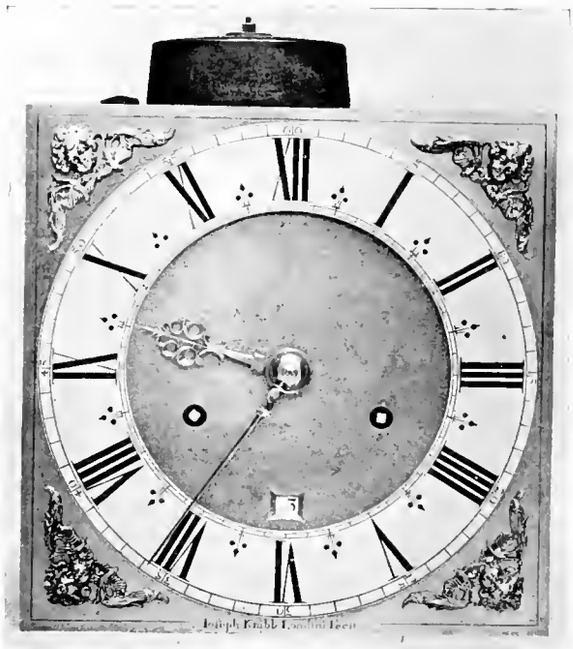


Fig. 411.

Fig. 410.

Fig. 412.

JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDINI, FECIT.

Fig. 410.

8-day Clock, in oak case veneered with English walnut, quartered and cross-banded.

6 ft. 0 ins. total height, 9¾ ins. width of waist. The carved pediment and central ball are typical of the early cases of Tompion and Knibb.

Fig. 411.

The dial of Fig. 161, signed on bottom edge "Joseph Knibb; Londini; Fecit."

Fig. 412.

Back view of clock movement, showing the pendulum, which is of seconds length (39.1393 ins.) and its "butterfly" nut on the rod for extra regulation, in addition to the nut shown in Fig. 165.

Date about 1690.

Richard Arnold, Esq.

"Grandfather" movements. Walnut or ebony veneer, the cases either plain or panelled, and sometimes, as in this example, a carved cresting to the hood, were the only enrichments he appears to have tolerated. He evidently regarded,—and rightly too,—the clock itself as being the main point of interest, and all elaborations of detail, finish and workmanship were lavished on the dial and the mechanism behind it. The next two examples, shown in Figs. 398, 399 and 400, clocks by Joseph Knibb from Mr. Wetherfield's collection, are exquisite illustrations of this point. Nothing could be finer than the Knibb dial, Fig. 398. The hour and the seconds circles are of solid silver, the dial and its beautiful corner-pieces, water gilt. Both hour and minute hands are exceptionally beautiful even for this age of fine clock-making. The striking is on two bells of different tones, and the clock strikes in Roman numeral fashion, an innovation which originated, as far as I know, with Joseph Knibb. Thus the deep tone bell is struck once at five o'clock, twice at ten. One, two or three blows on the small bell marks the first hours; four o'clock is sounded by one blow on the small followed by one on the large bell. One on the large followed by one on the small marks six o'clock; one on the small followed by two on the large is nine o'clock, and so on. A simple calculation will show that only thirty blows are struck by this method as compared with the usual seventy-eight in the twelve hours, a valuable economy in power. Considering that this Knibb clock is of month duration,

Fig. 413.
THE HOOD RAISED ON ITS CLICK-SPRING.
Showing the rocketting catch which fastens the hood when the trunk door is closed.

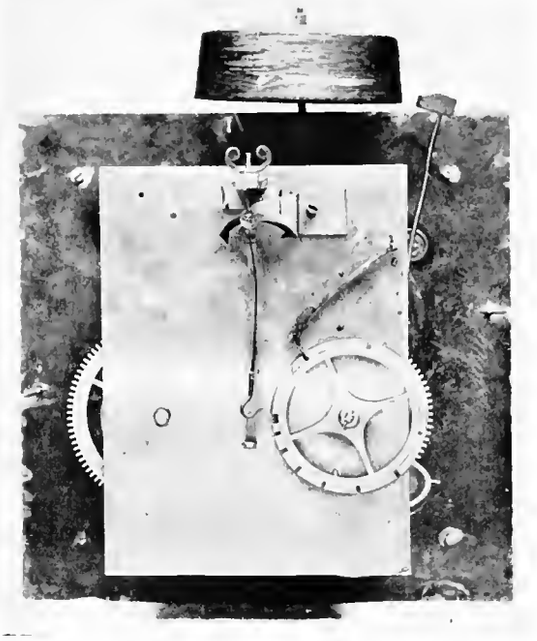


Fig. 414.
BACK VIEW OF THE CLOCK (FIG. 161).
Showing the outside locking plate and extra adjusting nut over the pendulum suspension.

and the striking has to function with the going train for the same period, the value of this striking system will be apparent in a clock of this size, as the case only measures 6 ft. 8 ins. in height, which precludes any undue length of the gut line on the barrel of the striking train. The dial is 10 ins. square. The case, Fig. 399, is veneered and panelled with ebony with the metal mounts water gilt. In my opinion this is one of the four finest examples in Mr. Wetherfield's collection.

Of similarly high quality to Fig. 399 is Fig. 400, also from the hand of Joseph Knibb. The case is veneered with ebony, the mouldings faced from solid wood, and the caps and bases of the hood-columns are of chased brass, water gilt. The spandrel-corners of the dial are engraved, in the early fashion of Fig. 392; the hour circle is narrow, the dial finely matted and water gilt, and the movement has the bolt-and-shutter maintaining power. This clock, in my opinion, is not only the earliest, but also the finest example of Joseph Knibb's work possessed by Mr. Wetherfield, even among the unique specimens which the collection contains, the previous example alone excepted. I have recently discovered that Quare copied this Roman numeral striking from Knibb. Mr. James Stuttard of Fence House, near Burnley, has kindly lent me two photographs, reproduced here in Figs. 401 and 402, which show the dial and the side view of a month clock by Dan Quare,

Fig. 415.
CHRISTOPHER GOULD, LONDON.

8-day Striking and Pull Repeating Clock. 5 bells. Marqueterie case. 5 ft. 9 ins. high. 7¼-in. dial. Date about 1690.
C. D. Rotch, Esq.

Fig. 416.
CORNELIUS HERBERT, LONDON.

8-day Striking Clock. Marqueterie case.
8 ft. 4 ins. high. 12-in. dial. Date about 1700.

[(These two clocks are photographed to the same scale).

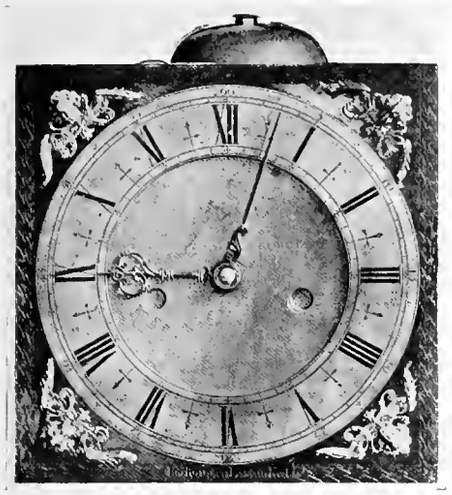


Fig. 417.
THOMAS TOMPION, LONDON.
Dial of 8-day clock of about 1700.

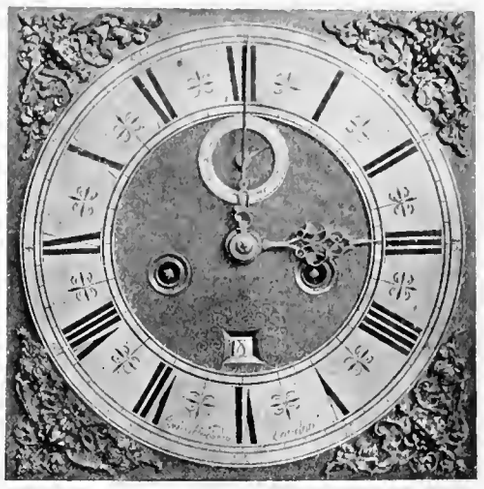


Fig. 418.
JACOBUS HASSANIUS, LONDON.
Dial of 8-day clock of 1710 type.

and the IV on the dial, instead of the usual IIII, indicates the adoption of this Roman numeral system of striking. (It is surprising, by the way, how many people will write the "4" as "IV" if they are asked to number a dial from memory. Actually this is always engraved "IIII" in any but dials of clocks striking on this plan.) The dial of this Quare clock is signed "Dan Quare, London," and above is the Roman figure III. This probably indicates that this clock is the third made by Quare on this system.

Mr. Richard Arnold has a bracket-clock by Knibb which also strikes in the same way. It is illustrated in Figs. 403 to 406. The same peculiarity of the "IV" in the dial numbering will be noticed. It is difficult to understand the reason of this striking in a bracket-clock, the striking-duration offering no problem, as it does in the case of a month long-case, especially when of small size. Actually, the going train of this clock requires to be wound five times in the same space of time as the striking train is wound twice. The system, therefore, in the case of this bracket clock, can only have been a conceit.

Fig. 407 illustrates two features which are rare on bracket-clock dials, and still rarer in the case of long-case clocks. The hour ring is cut away between the numerals, showing the matting of the dial underneath, and every minute on the outside of the circle is separately numbered from 1 to 60. This is technically known as a minute-numbered skeleton-dial. The pattern of the corner-pieces and the style of the case,

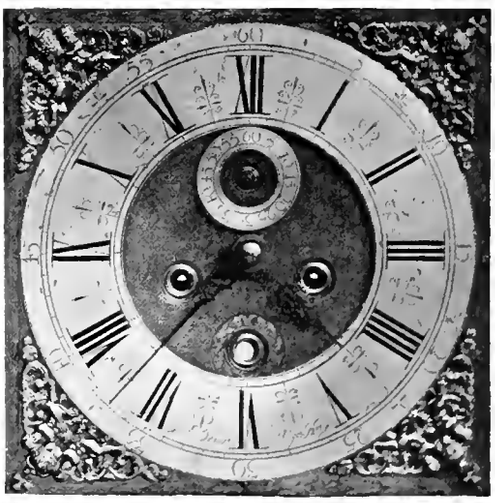


Fig. 419.
JOS. DAVIS, RATLEFE HIWAY.
Dial of 8-day clock of 1710 (late) type.

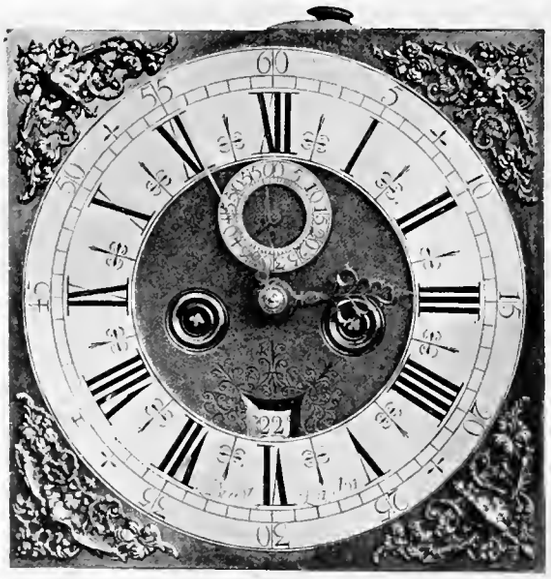


Fig. 420.
LANGLEY BRADLEY, LONDON.
Dial of 8-day clock of the 1710–15 type.

veneered with laburnum and inlaid with simple marqueterie of stars, fans and jessamine leaves, indicate a date not later than 1695 and possibly some ten years earlier. The movement is a month striker. The case measures 6 ft. 8 ins. in height. Fig. 408 is another skeleton minute-numbered dial from one of Joseph Knibb's bracket clocks, which shows the detail more distinctly.

While clocks of the type of the last five examples are rare and valuable, it is possible to procure more ordinary, but still very refined specimens, at quite a commercial price. It must be remembered, however, that these early clocks were, until quite recent years, very scantily appreciated, and have by no means reached their true value. Nothing could be more refined and pleasing, as articles of furniture, than the simple walnut long-case clocks such as Fig. 409. The movements are almost invariably of good, if not fine quality, the cases are usually of small unassertive size, and the clocks fulfil all the requirements of ordinary good-class furnishing. The collector, however, should learn to recognise a good clock at a glance. The appreciation of the following points should be practically instantaneous. The clock should be an eight-day, at least; thirty-hour clocks are worthless. It should have a striking train,—unless there exist sufficient reason to the contrary, as in the case of Fig. 394,—with both trains winding from the front of the dial, and the hands should be well pierced and of the pattern of the period of the clock. A study of clock-hands may be made, with ease and advantage, by the collector.

Several typical examples are illustrated on pages 341 to 343, and each clock illustration furnishes one pair, which can be examined with a magnifying glass. Corner-pieces may be of several patterns, but if they are merely rough castings, without chasing, they are subsequent additions, and it would be advisable to suspect the entire clock. The hour ring should be silvered,—unless the silvering has, obviously, been worn away,—and the minute divisions either on the extreme outer edge, or if set inside, with an additional space outside for the Arabic minute numerals, neither the space nor the numerals should be large. Coarse minute numerals indicate the late degenerate country-made clock.

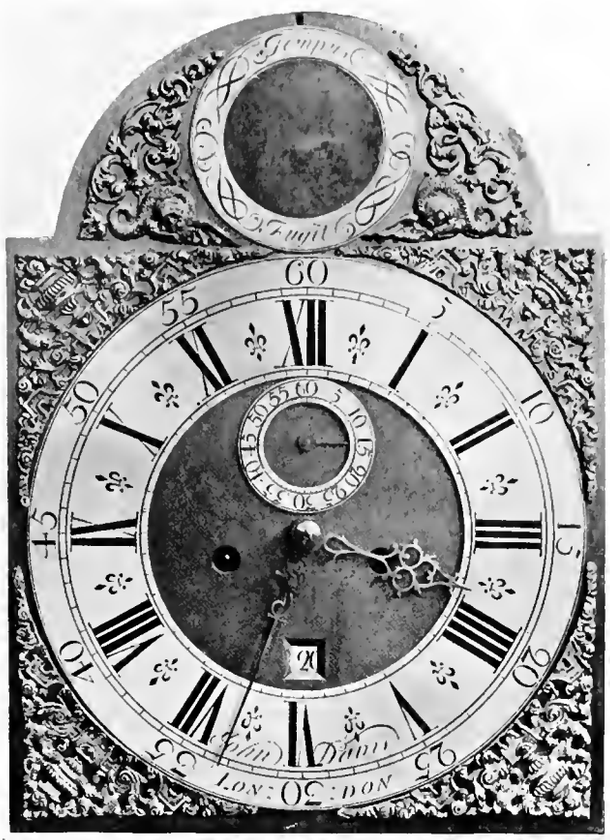


Fig. 421.
JOHN DAVIS, LONDON.
12-in square dial with added arch.
1730 type.

The pendulum should be of seconds' length, at least,—if the clock has a seconds dial, the minimum pendulum-length can be taken for granted,—and the weights should be of the original brass-cased kind for preference, not merely coarse lumps of lead, as they so frequently are. In examining a case, always pay the greatest attention to the plinth and the base, after this to the slides of the hood. These are the places where restorations or additions are the most likely. Legitimate restorations are quite permissible. A case such as Fig. 409, for example, even if much restored, would be preferable to a mere ruin. The double plinth of this case is the correct and original finish of high-grade cases of this period, and should be preferred to other patterns. Additional feet under the plinth are rarely original.

As pointed out before in this chapter, the hoods of these early long clocks have no opening doors, the hood itself being made to slide upwards on runners, held in position by a click-spring while the winding operation is performed. Another ingenious device, to oblige the winder to open the bottom door, and thus to prevent the common practice of winding, vigorously, until the weight collides forcibly with the seat-board of the clock,

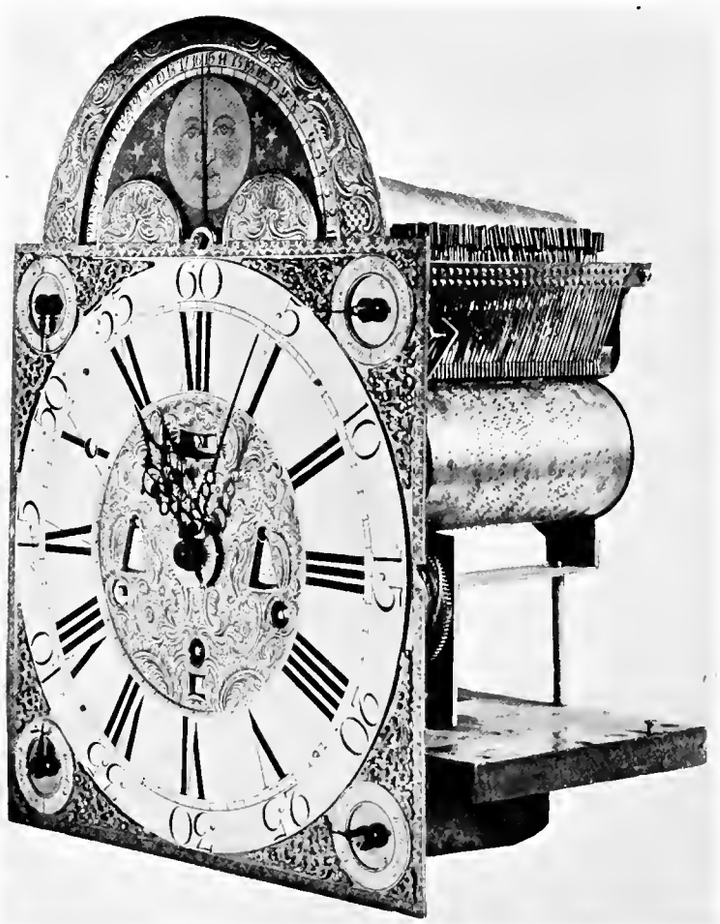


Fig. 422.
AN EXAMPLE OF THE DIAL AND MOVEMENT OF AN ELABORATE LONG-CASE MUSICAL CLOCK.

was to lock the hood with a rocketting catch, which was only released by opening the lower door (see Fig. 413).

The square-dial clocks are the most interesting and also the most valuable. These early specimens, even at the present day, offer a chance, to the educated and discriminating collector, of acquiring at a price which is certain to appreciate in the near future. The same remark applies to the ebony-cased basket-top late Stuart and Orange bracket clocks, which will be described and illustrated later on. These clocks cannot be forged to deceive anyone with a slight expert knowledge, although the names of famous makers, such as East, Tompion, Knibb, Quare, Gretton or Graham are sometimes re-engraved on indifferent clocks, the original engraving being stoned out. A clock without a maker's name should always be regarded as suspicious, as the rules of the Clockmakers' Company,—a powerful and autocratic guild,—obliged each maker to sign his work, up to at least as late as 1740, beyond which date custom resulted in the same practice being followed until the early years of the nineteenth century.

I have illustrated, in Figs. 410 to 414, full details of a long-case clock by Joseph Knibb, of a kind not exceptional, like many of the examples in Mr. Wetherfield's collection,—in fact, of a quality which it might be the fortune of any discriminating collector to find in country districts, especially in Oxfordshire, from whence Mr. Arnold purchased this clock early in 1919. It has been chosen for this reason, and also because its many virtues are not apparent at a first glance. To begin with, the clock is not

Fig. 423.

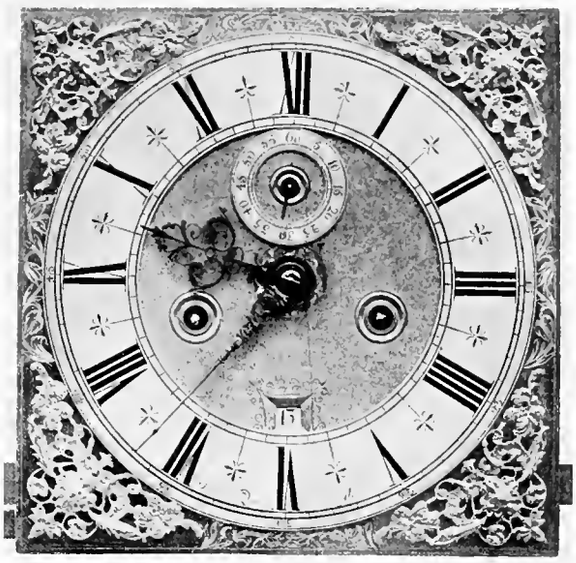


Fig. 424.

Figs. 423 and 424.

DAN QUARE, LONDON.

Month Striking Clock.
Finely engraved dial and chased spandrel corners.
Hands were finely pierced.
Oak case veneered with burr walnut.
Carved cresting and corkscrew pillars to hand.
Date about 1700.

D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

only by Joseph Knibb; it is Knibb's workmanship untouched by the clock-jobber. The hour ring has been re-silvered and the numerals re-waxed,—and that is all. The hands are beautifully pierced and carved, and the cherub-headed corner-pieces are well modelled and chased. There is no seconds dial, although the pendulum is of seconds' length. The winding-holes are wide apart,—due to the unusual "planting" of the trains,—which give a refined appearance to the dial. The hour ring is broad (it must be remembered that the dial has not the delicacy, as it has not the quality of examples such as Fig. 398), with the minute divisions on the outer edge. The outside locking-plate is large, and spoked, planted outside the back-plate in the usual way with early clocks. Later on, this locking-plate is found attached to the main wheel, and inside the plates. A still later development is the rack-striker, for details of which the reader must be referred to "*English Domestic Clocks*." Joseph Knibb's peculiar square-section striking bell will be noticed above the dial, and the same fashion will be remarked on the other Knibb clocks illustrated in this chapter.

The pendulum bob has no regulating screw underneath, but the pendulum rod

itself has a "butterfly" adjusting screw, and there is another above the suspension. The spoon-shaped rocketting catch, before referred to, which locks the hood when the lower door is closed, can be seen in Fig. 413. The hood is here raised on its coil-spring catch, attached, high up, on the backboard at the side. In addition to this, the lower rail of the hood is fitted with a keyhole, so that the hood can be locked. Joseph Knibb did not intend his clock to be wound by unauthorised persons. The case is of oak,

Fig. 425.
CASE OF PANELLED EBONY.

Fig. 426.
CASE VENEERED WITH FLORAL MARQUETERIE IN PANEL.

Fig. 427.
CASE VENEERED WITH "ALL-OVER" MARQUETERIE.

Fig. 428.

CASE VENEERED WITH "ALL-OVER " MARQUETERIE.

Twisted columns to hood.

Fig. 429.

MINIATURE CLOCK WITH SKELETON DIAL.

Case veneered with " all-over " marqueterie.

Fig. 430.

CASE VENEERED WITH ARABESQUE MARQUETERIE.

Gilt spires and trusses to hood.

Viscount Rothermere

Fig. 431.
ARABESQUE MARQUETERIE OF DARK WOOD ON LIGHT GROUND.

Fig. 432.
SEAWEED MARQUETERIE.

Fig. 433.
MOSAIC MARQUETERIE.

Collection of D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

veneered with English walnut of good figure. The hood has the Tompion type of cresting (refer to Fig. 397) centred with a turned ball.

Fig. 434.

This clock has been specially illustrated as an example of a kind and quality for which the clock-collector should seek. In good condition, with the base intact, and the works not tampered with, £100 to £125 would be a reasonable price to pay.

The collector should, however, seek for exceptional peculiarities, such as dials with the hour circle cut away between the numerals so as to show the brass dial underneath,—the skeleton dial before described,—or the separate numbering of each minute in the outer ring, as such details materially add to the value and interest of the clock and are not always reckoned as extras in the price demanded. Clocks of unusual duration are rare. Thus a month clock will command a higher sum than an eight-day, other things being equal, and a year clock will realise at least four times the price of a month.

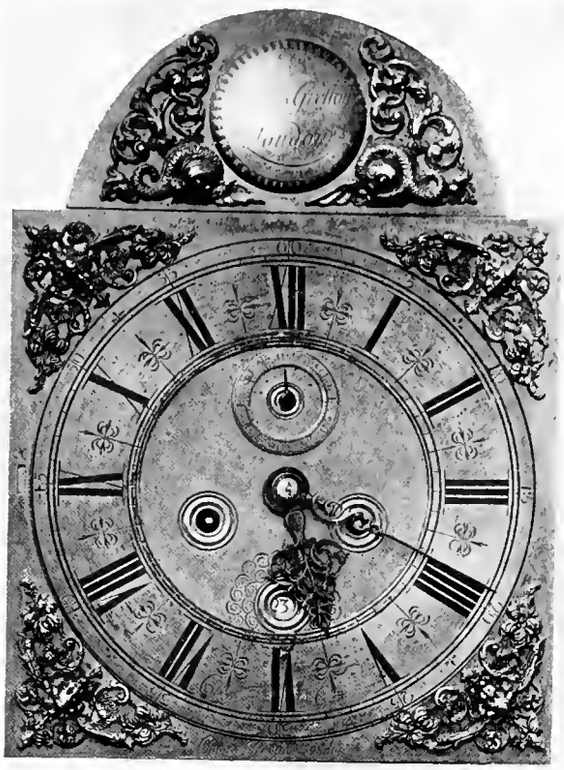


Fig. 435.

Figs. 434 and 435.
CHARLES GRETTON, LONDON.

8-day Striking Clock.
Added arch top to dial.
Dial signed in three places.
Oak cases veneered with walnut and inlaid with floral marqueterie.
8 ft. 5½ ins. high over all by 11⅛ width of waist.
Dial 11 ins. wide by 15⅜ ins. high.
Date about 1720–5.

Richard Arnold, Esq.

Fig. 436.

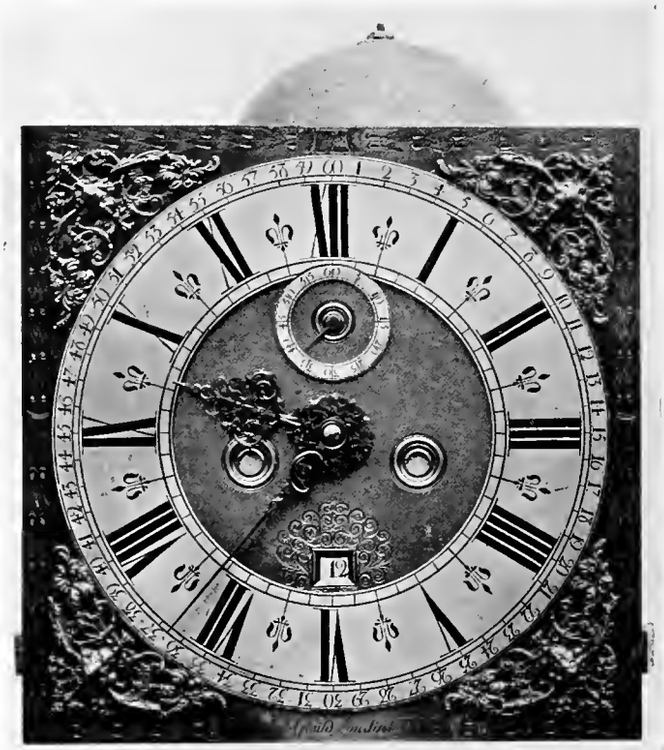


Fig. 437.

Figs. 436 and 437.

CHRISTOPHER GOULD, LONDON.

8-day Striking Clock.

Bolt-and-shutter maintaining power.

Exceptionally fine hands.

Each minute on dial separately numbered.

Case decorated with gilt gesso on black lacquer ground.

7 ft. 8 ins. high. 12-in. dial.

Date about 1695–1700.

D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

A year "striker," that is, a clock with a striking train of a year's duration between windings, is an impossibility. A little thought will show the reason why.

Miniature clocks, i.e. long-cases which are from 4 ft. 6 ins. to 5 ft., or less, are very rare, and clocks with $1\frac{1}{4}$ seconds pendulums almost equally so. The collector should note that primitive, "pull-up" hanging wall clocks are frequently found enclosed in miniature cases, but they are never original in this form. Genuine miniature,—or "Grandmother,"—clocks should be eight-day, key-winding, and, if possible, with pendulums of seconds length. They were often made, however, with short "bob" or bracket-clock pendulums reaching only to the seat board of the clock. A miniature long-case clock, with key-wind, seconds pendulum, of eight-day duration, with three trains,—i.e. chiming on bells,—and in a good marqueterie case, would be worth from £200 to £300, and certain adjuncts, before described, such as a month's duration, numbered minutes or a skeleton dial, might easily add another £100 to the price. The duration of a clock, between windings, cannot be increased, as would be imagined, by lengthening the fall of the weight and the gut line, as the barrels will only allow a certain number of turns of the line. Neither can another wheel be added without absolutely remodelling the train,—and spoiling the clock,—although this has been gravely stated as a possibility in a recent book on the subject.

A very exceptional miniature eight-day "Grandmother" clock by Christopher Gould, in a fine marqueterie case, is shown in Fig. 415. It is fitted with a pull-repeating string, striking the hours on a large and the quarters on four smaller bells. Its height is only 5 ft. 9 ins., and it is shown with another fine clock, of similar type, by Cornelius Herbert, Fig. 416, both being reproduced to the same scale.

Before leaving the subject of the square dial, it will be advisable to pass a few examples in review and to show

Fig. 438.
SAMUEL LEE, LONDON.
8-day Striking Clock.
Burr walnut case with carved mouldings.
Date about 1725.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

Fig. 439.
MARKWICK, LONDON.
8-day Clock. Green lacquer case, 9 ft. 4 ins. total height. Date about 1735–40.
Percy Webster, Esq.

the changes which occur in the first years of the eighteenth century. Fig. 417 is a Tompion dial of 1700, of beautiful detail and workmanship. The hands are simple, of fine form, and well pierced and carved. The corner-pieces are of the earlier simple cherub-head form, but the later character is indicated by the band of engraving round the square dial,—a late but unusual feature,—and the setting of the minute divisions back from the outside edge of the hour ring, with a separate circle to contain the Arabic numerals. Although the outer-edged minutes were sometimes used on dials as late as 1705, this separate circle for the numerals is an infallible indication of the eighteenth century. As the years advance, this separate ring becomes larger, until in the later arched form of dial the Arabic numerals are much more important than the minute divisions themselves. Long-case clocks also grow considerably in size after about 1705, about 6 ft. being the usual height from 1700 to 1705, but after 1735 it is not exceptional to find cases as much as 8 ft. 6 ins. from the floor to the top of the dome.

In the next example, Fig. 418, we have the square-dial type of 1710, the hour ring broad, the seconds dial circle slightly cutting into its inside edge, the winding-holes ringed,—to prevent scratching of the matted surface of the dial with the winding-key,—well pierced hands, but now trenching over their particular divisions on the hour ring ; and elaborated cherub-head spandril corners. Fig. 419 is the succeeding style, differing very little, excepting in the greater breadth of the Arabic numeral ring, and the corner-pieces of amorini supporting a crown capped by a Maltese cross. Fig. 420 has the earlier corner-piece of Fig. 418, but the hour ring of 1710–15. This example may be classed as the last phase of the square dial.

Opinions are divided as to the date of the earliest arch dials, and I am inclined to the view that they did

not become fashionable until between 1720 and 1725. The earliest specimen known is the large Tompion clock in the Pump Room at Bath. I have twice seen a replica of this in private hands. The Pump Room clock was made about 1709, but the arch was evidently more than an innovation at this period; it was a discovery. A curious fact, and one showing how paramount were the dictates of fashion in the early eighteenth century, is that the very early arched dials are really the older square form with the arch added. The junction of the arch and the dial is sometimes hidden by a strip of brass, but in other examples the joining of the two is frankly revealed. The true arch dial, that is, one which was made specifically as such, and in the one piece, of the very earliest type, is rare. Fig. 421 is an example. The arch fulfils no function beyond one of ornament, being filled by a silvered ring, inscribed "Tempus Fugit," flanked by dolphin spandrels. It is a significant sign of an arch dial from 1725 to 1735 that *the hour ring is divided into quarters between each numeral on the inside edge.* In later clocks this is always omitted.

From 1740 to nearly 1765 long-case clocks were sparingly made in London and the important southern county towns. The fashion evidently veered from the long-case to the bracket clock, as the latter were plentiful enough during this period. After 1765 the long-case dial loses much of its earlier interest. Clocks being taller, and the dial in consequence being placed at a greater height, the general features become coarser. Many fine clocks were made in this late bold style, Fig. 422 being a noteworthy example. This clock strikes, chimes and plays tunes, no less than fifty hammers being used, operated from the spiked drum shown in the illustration. These drums were usually made so that one could be removed and another substituted. The four subsidiary dials, on the corners, regulate the chiming and playing. The arch has the usual moon-work, a revolving

Fig. 440.
WALTER SMITH, CUCKFIELD.
8-day Striking Clock.
Dead-beat escapement.
Green lacquer case.
Date about 1760–70.

disc, numbered with the days of the lunar month, and a fixed pointer in the centre. The days of the calendar month are shown through the aperture under the hands, on either side are the month and day, respectively, and above, the number of the month itself. This clock is of Dutch make, but others of similar elaboration were made in this country. A noticeable point of difference between the early and late arch dials is that the arch of the former is always less than half a circle, but the latter is always either a full half-circle or even more.

Fig. 441.
WALNUT CASE, ARCH DIAL, WITH CORNICE ARCHED TO CORRESPOND WITH THE DIAL.

"Grandfather" Clock Cases.

The cases of these so-called "Grandfather" clocks of the Stuart, Orange, Queen Anne and Georgian periods can be classified as follows: From 1670 to 1715 we find the panelled ebony or ebonised cases (which are always early) being made side by side with those veneered with plain walnut or inlaid with marqueterie. From 1715 to about 1740 we get the plain walnut case, generally veneered with wood of rich figure.

Fig. 442.
WALNUT CASE, ARCH-DIAL CLOCK, BY JOHN ELLICOTT, SQUARE CORNICE OVER ARCH.

Lacquered cases overlap, from 1705 to 1760, but they are rare before 1715. From 1740 to 1765 long-case clocks are exceptional, and after this latter date mahogany, either solid or in veneers, is almost exclusively employed. It is hardly necessary here to give a number of examples of each class,—although the types are very numerous,—as the subject has already been dealt with, in full detail, in "*English Domestic Clocks*." For the same reason, and also because this book is intended as a guide to the collector, to show him what to collect, rather than what to avoid, examples of the declining period, when the long-case clock became depraved in the hands of the small provincial and even the important Yorkshire makers, have been omitted. Those who desire information on these points can be referred to the larger book.

Marqueterie cases can be resolved into several classes or kinds, although, with some reservation, these are not indicative of late or early date. There are many reasons, and a certain amount of evidence, for the assertion that many of these marqueterie cases were made in Holland to the order of the celebrated makers of the period from 1690 to 1720. The reasons for this conclusion have been stated, at considerable length, and in full detail, in "*English Domestic Clocks*," and there is neither reason nor space for a recapitulation here. If this theory be admitted, however, the various styles may easily be, and probably were, older than the era of the importation of these marqueterie cases into England, and differences in decoration were probably dictated, either by the stock of the Dutch case-maker, or the personal predilections of the English horologist. There is no doubt that the cases inlaid with simple marqueterie, such as Fig. 407, are usually earlier in date than those in the full marqueterie style, but once this type of case was admitted to the fashionable clock-making world,—it was persistently rejected by Tompion, and only tolerated by Knibb in his later clocks,—any co-ordination of style and date ceased to exist.

Fig. 443.
HIGGS AND EVANS, ROYAL EXCHANGE.
8-day Clock in red lacquer case.
An example made for the Spanish market.
8 ft. 2 ins. high.
Dial 16½ ins by 12 ins.

Fig. 444.

MAHOGANY CASE WITH CONCAVE CRESTING TO THE HOOD.

1750 type.

With the exception of the early star and fan inlay, we can divide marqueterie into "all-over," panelled and mosaic. Further classification of the marqueterie itself into coloured, monotone, arabesque, etc., might be attempted, but it would be almost necessary to make a separate class for each clock, and this system, therefore, must be abandoned. Generally speaking, however, coloured marqueterie, especially when the ornament is of jessamine leaves and flowers of white or stained green ivory, in a ground of dark wood, is earlier than the inlay of yellow holly or sycamore in walnut. Panelled ornament, as a rule, is earlier than "all-over" marqueterie, but this is subject to wide exceptions.

The form of the long-case itself undergoes a defined progressive change from 1680 to 1710. Apart from miniature or "grandmother" clocks,—that is, those which were specifically made of exceptionally small size,—hoods were usually made for 10-inch dials up to 1690, and

Fig. 445.

MAHOGANY CASE WITH CONCAVE CRESTING TO THE HOOD.

1770 type.

Fig. 446.

WALNUT CASE "GRANDMOTHER" CLOCK.

1750 type (very rare).

Fig. 447.

MAHOGANY CASE, REGULATOR CLOCK.

Dead-beat escapement.
1790 type.

Fig. 448.

SATINWOOD LONG-CASE CLOCK.

In the form of a balloon bracket clock on a pedestal. *c.* 1800.

from thence to 1700 the 11-inch dial was the rule. In the case of month and year clocks, where greater space under the dial was required for the extra wheels of the trains, these measurements were usually exceeded. One almost invariable custom, before 1695, was to make the bold moulding, under the hood, of convex form, and after that date of concave section. Domes above the hoods, with flanking, and often surmounting spires, were the general fashion, with important clocks, after about 1695, before which date the hoods were roofed and left square. Cases veneered and panelled with ebony are always early, and generally of Dutch manufacture. Corkscrew pillars flanking the hood are earlier, *in style only*, than plain columns, and the latter, when in original condition, and when attached to marqueterie cases, were always inlaid to correspond. To veneer circular columns implies that the veneer is in a state of great strain, and it readily peels off, especially if the case be exposed to damp. The former presence of marqueterie on these columns can usually be detected by two fillets remaining, of veneer thickness, above the base and below the astragal rings under the capitals.

A review of these early long-case clocks would not be complete without an example of the finer work of Dan Quare, a maker whose work appears to have varied from the

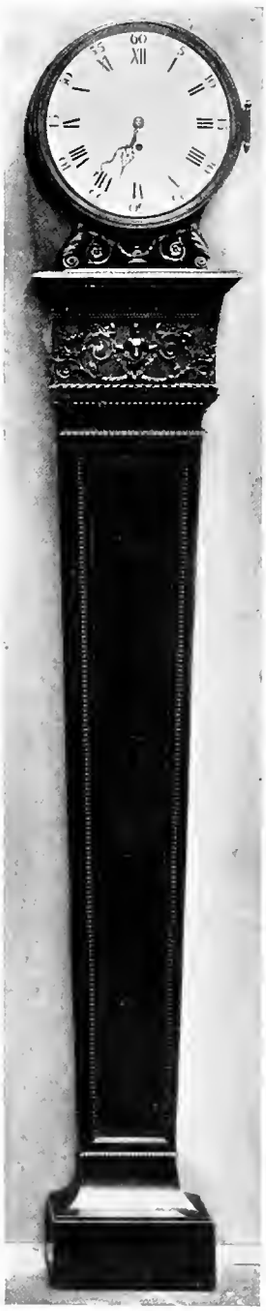


Fig. 449.
AYNSWORTH THWAITES, CLERKENWELL.
8-day, Long Pendulum Clock. Case veneered with Thuja wood.

Fig. 450.
AYNSWORTH THWAITES, CLERKENWELL.
The companion to Fig. 449.

Offices of H.M. Secretary of State for India.

Fig. 451.

JOHN HOLMES, LONDON.

Mahogany case in the true Chippendale style (very rare). D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

very highest class to the most mediocre. He had a most extended business career, was born in 1649, admitted to the Clockmakers' Company, in 1671, became Master in 1708 and died in 1724. He was a member of the Society of Friends and was buried in their ground at Bunhill Fields. He was clockmaker to the first of the House of Brunswick, but this appointment was only made a few years before his death, and when he was quite an old man. His finest work was done from about 1685 to 1700, in Exchange Alley, that centre of the clockmaking craft close to the Royal Exchange. Quare specialised in clocks of exceptional duration; at least four-year clocks by him being known. Mr. Wetherfield has one, another is at Buckingham Palace, a third at Hampton Court and I have since seen a fourth in a country house. It is probable that there are others. Figs. 423 and 424 illustrate a fine month clock by Quare, in a burr-walnut veneered case. The hour hand, of broad spade

Fig. 452.

AN EXAMPLE OF A CASE USUALLY KNOWN AS "CHIPPENDALE."

These clocks are usually of Lancashire make.

form, is typical of this maker, and the case, although plain, is of beautiful quality. I am of opinion that Quare only adopted the marqueterie case grudgingly, and for his later, and poorer work. When we consider the time and thought which these old makers expended on their clocks, it must have been annoying to have had them considered merely as pieces of furniture, and prized solely for the decorative quality of their cases.

Before dismissing these fascinating square-dial clocks from our notice, it will be as well to pass, in an orderly progression, a few types of cases in rapid review. Fig. 425 is a Tompion case in panelled ebony, the dial of which has already been shown in Fig. 417. Fig. 426 is a case veneered with floral marqueterie, panelled, in a background of figured walnut. Fig. 427 is an example of all-over marqueterie, and without superstructure to the hood. Fig. 428 has the dome and spires to the hood. Fig. 429, which is reduced in the same proportion as Fig. 428, is a charming miniature clock with a skeleton dial. In Fig. 430, the marqueterie is more of the Arabesque type, and the hollow moulding,

Fig. 453.
EDWARD EAST, LONDON.
8-day Striking Bracket Clock.
Ebony case.
Date about 1680.

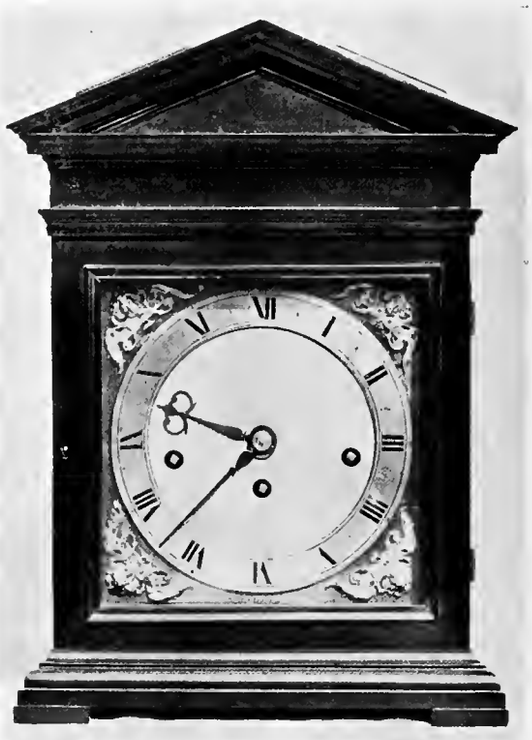


Fig. 454.
EDWARD STAUNTON, LONDON.
8-day, 3-train, Quarter-striking Clock.
Three bells. Ebony case.
Date about 1680.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

below the hood, is decorated with carved and gilt trusses. The finials are also of carved and gilt pine, to correspond. Fig. 431 is a tall month clock by Charles Clay, 9 ft. high, and with a 12-inch dial, similar in type to Fig. 430. Fig. 432 approaches to the seaweed kind of marqueterie, and Fig. 433 is an excellent example of the mosaic inlay already referred to. Fig. 434 departs from the square-dial form, and is very exceptional for this reason, as when the arch dial came into vogue, marqueterie was a bygone fashion. This is a late example, probably of about 1720–5, and the clock has a square dial with an added arch. Its dial is shown in Fig. 435, where the join of the arch to the dial can be clearly seen.

Figs. 436 and 437, which close this series of square-dial clocks, illustrate a superb clock and dial by Christopher Gould in Mr. Wetherfield's collection. The dial has beautiful hands, of the most elaborate kind I have ever seen, and every minute is separately numbered on the outside of the hour ring. The case is decorated with a raised gilded gesso on a ground of black lacquer.

Fig. 455.
ROBERT SEIGNIOR, LONDON.
8-day Striking Bracket Clock.
Ebony and tortoise-shell case.
Date about 1690.

Fig. 456.
THE ENGRAVED BACK PLATE OF FIG. 455.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

Generally speaking, the introduction of the arch dial marks a distinct period in English clock-making. Tompion used the arch form on the Pump Room clock at Bath in 1709 and on at least two other examples, but only as an innovation. Fig. 438 is the earliest arch-dial clock I have seen, and this cannot be dated before 1720 and is probably some five years later. In this clock the arch is added for a purpose, to contain a revolving seconds dial with a fixed central pointer. It will be noted in these early examples how low the arch is, rarely as much as the half of a circle. The case of Fig. 438 is even finer than its clock. The carcase-work is of oak, veneered with burr walnut of rich figure, and nearly all the moulding members are carved from solid walnut.

The vogue for lacquer-work, as a decoration for clock-cases, extended from about 1710 nearly to the close of the eighteenth century. One of the earliest examples has already been illustrated in Figs. 436 and 437. Fig. 439 is a fine tall clock, with elaborate finials and trusses to the hood, decorated on a ground of dark green lacquer. Its total height is 9 ft. 4 ins., and it must have been made for an important room. Fig. 440, also

Fig. 457.

Fig. 458.

EDWARD EAST, LONDON.

Front and back views of a day-and-night clock. 17½ ins by 12 ins. by 6¼ ins. At night the Roman numerals on the revolving disc are illuminated from behind. Date about 1680.

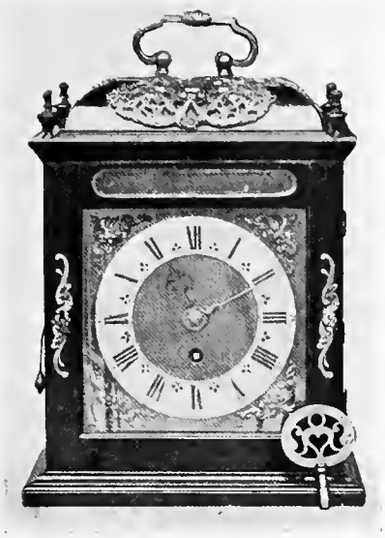


Fig. 459.
JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.
1690.

Fig. 460.
SAMUEL WATSON, LONDON.
Dated 1687.

Fig. 461.
RICHARD JARRETT, LONDON.
Skeleton dial. 1685.

Fig. 462.
JOSEPH KNIBB, LONDON.
1690.

EXAMPLES OF EBONY-CASED BASKET-TOP BRACKET CLOCKS.

a green-lacquered clock of the usual type of 1760–70, is exceptional in possessing a dead-beat escapement, and is of superb quality, equal to a fine regulator, and yet it was made by an insignificant maker in what must, at that date, have been a small Sussex village.

From 1725 to about 1740 the fashion was for long-case clocks veneered with figured walnut of the type shown in Fig. 441 and 442. The cornice following the arch of the dial and upper door, as in Fig. 441, is the earlier style. Fig. 442 is a fine clock by John Ellicott, with a chart for calculating the equation of time pasted on the inside of the lower door.

A good example, and an exceptionally fine specimen, of a lacquered case of about 1755–60, is shown in Fig. 443. The ground is red, the ornament raised and gilded in the "Anglo-Chinese" manner of the period. The clock is a chiming and musical movement, playing four tunes, marked as "Song," "March," "Minuet" and "Carillon"

Fig. 463.
E. SPEAKMAN, LONDON.
Domed brass basket.
690.

Fig. 464.
JOHN MARTIN, LONDON.
Case inlaid with marqueterie.
1690–1700.
D. A. F. Wetherfield, Esq.

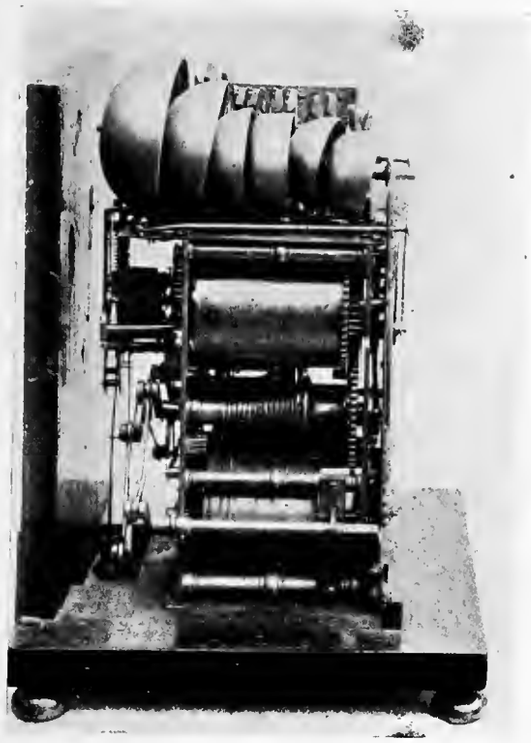


Fig. 465.

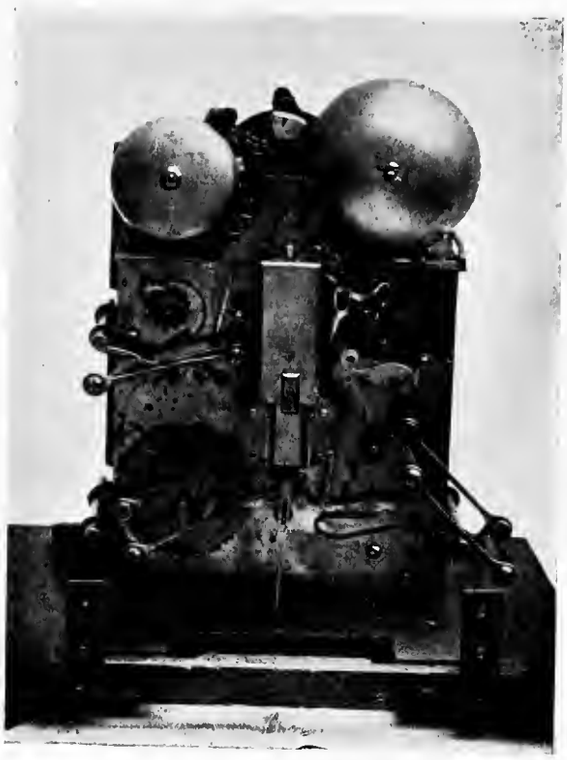


Fig. 466.

Fig. 467.

AHASUERUS FROMANTEEL,
LONDINI, FECIT.

Ebony-cased, 30-hour, Quarter-striking and Musical Clock.
Very rare and unusual specimen. At 5, 9 and 12 o'clock one of two tunes is played on eleven bells from a spiked drum.

Fig. 465.

Side view of clock, showing nest of bells.

Fig. 466.

Back view, showing unusual winding cranks. (The winding-squares are beneath the dial.)

Fig. 467.

Front view of the clock.
Height, 14 ins.; width, 12 ins.; depth, 9½ ins.
Dial 8¼ ins. by 7⅞ ins.
Date about 1665–70.

Hansard Watt, Esq.

respectively on the right-hand subsidiary dial in the arch, the left being for "Chime" and "Not Chime," both dials having a small index pointer. The striking and playing is effected by hammers striking on nested bells, operated from a revolving spiked drum. This is a good example of the elaborate, and somewhat gaudy clocks which were made for the Spanish market from 1750 to 1770. In the signing of the dial of this clock "David Evans" becomes "Diego Evans." The full style of the firm, "Higgs and Evans of the Royal Exchange" (they had practically a monopoly of the Spanish market, as Markwick Markham and Borrell had of the Turkish) was more often engraved "Higgs y Diego Evans." The double concave cresting to the hood was a favourite detail, especially with mahogany cases, from 1750 to 1770. Fig. 444 is an example of the first and Fig. 445 the last of these dates. Both clocks are of good quality, and only minute details of dial and case indicate the early date of the one and the later date of the other. Fig. 446 is a pretty miniature clock in a walnut case of the 1750 period, interesting on account of its diminutive size, but hardly representative of its period, as these small long-case clocks rarely followed current fashions very closely.

Fig. 468.

JOSEPH WINDMILLS, LONDON.

8-day Striking Bracket Clock, in walnut case of unusual form. Finely chased brass mounts.

17 ins. high, without handle, 9½ ins. wide by 6 ins. deep across case. Date about 1715–20.

Capt. N. R. Colville, M.C.

Regulator Clocks.

With the late-eighteenth-century regulator clocks we get a return to the earlier square

dial of the late seventeenth century, and the fashion obtained, as in Fig. 447, for clocks which were hardly of the regulator type, although they doubtless fulfilled the same function, of timing other clocks and watches in regulating shops. Clocks of this kind are almost invariably of fine quality, usually with "dead-beat" escapements.

Exceptional Clocks.

From about 1775 to nearly 1800 long-case clocks of exceptional form were sparingly made, but these, although very interesting to the clock student, are quite sporadic, illustrating or exemplifying no fashion, and are, therefore, somewhat out of place in an orderly progression of English clock fashions. Fig. 448, apparently a satinwood "balloon" bracket clock on a pedestal, is really a long-pendulum clock with a seconds dial. Figs. 197 and 198 are an interesting pair from the India Office, formerly in the East India Company's House. The one on the right is a long-pendulum clock, the one on the left (now inoperative) was formerly connected with a weather-vane on the roof, and showed the direction and force of the wind, the phases of the moon, etc. Both cases are veneered with Thuja wood, and the clocks are signed by the one maker, Aynsworth Thwaites of Clerkenwell. The design of the cases exhibits, strongly, the influence of the school of Robert Adam.

Fig. 469.
THE INVERTED-BELL TYPE OF CASE.
1730–40.

The El Dorado of the clock collector is the Chippendale long-case, that is, one in style similar to the examples illustrated in Chippendale's "*Gentleman and Cabinet-*

makers' Director," not of the usual type which is often loosely styled "Chippendale." Mr. Wetherfield has one, an apparently unique clock by John Holmes, illustrated here in Fig. 451, of date about 1765–70, in a mahogany case, the design of which is strongly reminiscent of Thomas Chippendale. The "Director" designs are irrational and absurd, and could not have been made as they were designed, but this clock is just what one would expect from one of these patterns in the hands of a practical and cultured clock-case maker. Fig. 452 shows what is usually described as a "Chippendale" clock; it is of a type which was made, in numbers, in Lancashire during the late eighteenth century.

Fig. 470.
THE TRUE BELL-TOP CASE.
1755–95 type.

Bracket Clocks.

With the younger brother of the long-case clock, the spring-driven or bracket clock (usually known as a "table clock" in the eighteenth century) we have to return nearly to our starting-point. The earliest examples known resemble very much the hoods of the architectural ebony panelled long-case clocks of the 1675 period (e.g. Fig. 400). The cases are generally either veneered with ebony or are of solid pear tree, stained black. The movements are always of the highest quality, with fine early hands, narrow hour circles, with minute divisions on the extreme outer edge, well chased corner-pieces and water-gilt dials. Fig. 453 is an example of Edward East's work of the period when he was Court Horologist to Charles II. Fig. 454 is a three-train quarter-striking clock,—three bells,—in an ebony case, by Edward Staunton, of the 1675–80 period, and Figs. 455 and 456 show

the front view and the back plate, respectively, of a fine clock by Robert Seignior, in an ebony and tortoise-shell case, of some ten years later. Figs. 457 and 458 are front and back views of another Edward East clock, with a curious device of a pierced hour circle behind the dial, visible through a lunette above the engraved hour ring, the numerals being cut out to show a light through, when a candle or some other light is placed behind the dial. This example may, therefore, be described as a "day-and-night clock."

These early architectural bracket-clocks are exceedingly rare, and well worthy the attention of the collector. Somewhat more plentiful, but sufficiently scarce, in fine qualities, are the basket-top cases, the succeeding fashion which covers the forty years from 1680 to 1720. These cases, six examples of which are given in Figs. 459 to 464, are generally in veneered ebony, but they are to be found, in rare instances, with marqueterie cases,—e.g. Fig. 464,—still rarer, veneered with tortoise-shell, and, rarest of all, with mother-o'-pearl. The basket top may be of wood, brass, or,—as in the case of a fine clock, similar to Fig. 461, and by the same maker, in Mr. Wetherfield's collection,—of pierced silver. Fig. 462 shows the simple moulded ebony top, the case mounted

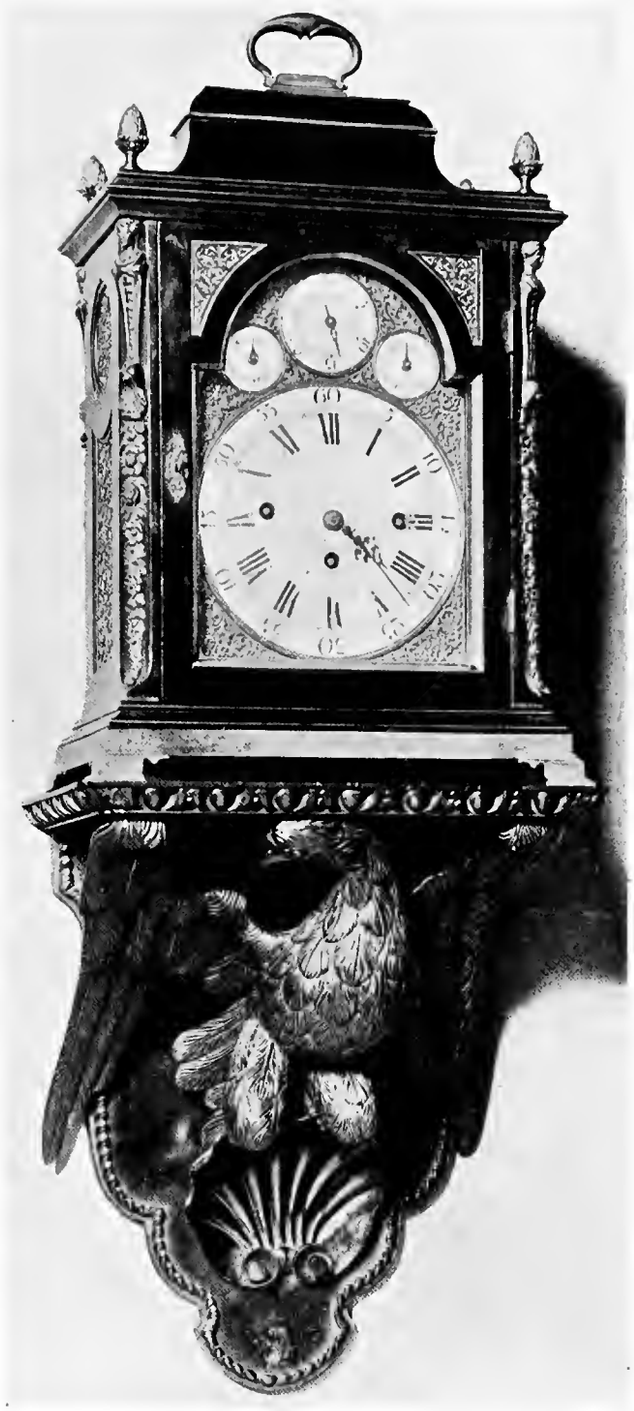


Fig. 471.

THE TRUE BELL-TOP STYLE OF CASE ON ITS BRACKET.

This is the true bracket clock.
1760–1800 type.

only with the engraved fret in the upper rail, and the two escutcheon plates on the upright styles of the door. Fig. 459,—a very fine Joseph Knibb clock, original even to its winding-key,—has the brass mounted top and corner spires; Fig. 460 possesses the brass pierced basket on a fine clock by Samuel Watson, signed and dated 1687, and Fig. 461 the metal basket and ball spires, on a clock with a skeleton dial, from the hand of Richard Jarrett. Fig. 463 shows the brass domed basket with a finely chased handle and spires, the clock by E. Speakman. Fig. 464 is a clock by John Martin, unfortunately with a type of minute hand some sixty years later than the clock, in a case veneered with fine arabesque marqueterie. All these basket-top clocks illustrated here are pull-string repeaters, repeating either the last hour or the quarters —or frequently both—on bells.

Fig. 472.
AN ELABORATED VERSION OF THE BELL-TOP STYLE OF CASE.
1770–1800.

One of the earliest, certainly the most elaborate, and, possibly, the finest of these basket-top clocks is shown in Figs. 465 to 467. This remarkable specimen is from the collection of Mr. Hansard Watt, at Hampstead. The case is of ebony, veneered on oak, with a front door which opens by operating a concealed spring. The winding-holes are below the dial edge, and this has necessitated a system of double cranks for the winding, which can be seen in Figs. 465 and 466. The entire case, with the exception of the back-board, can be lifted off its base, in the manner of the early long-case hoods. The escapement is a crown-wheel, with a "crutched" bob pendulum. The quarters are

struck on two bells (ting-tang) and the hours on a separate bell. One of two tunes can be played, at will, at 5, 9 and 12 o'clock, on eleven bells, operated from a spiked drum in the fashion of a musical box. The duration, between the windings, is only thirty hours, but this is the period of the brass lantern clock of the pull-up kind, the eight-day clock not being known at this date.

The arch type of dial in the bracket-clock, as in the long-case, begins with the same flattened form, rarely as much as the half of a circle, and usually with the lunette used merely as a decorative feature. The first arch-dial bracket clocks, such as Fig. 468, are exceedingly rare, much more so than is the case with the tall clocks. This example is by Joseph Windmills, a name of high repute, and the maker, as one would expect, of the square dial, both in long-case and bracket clocks, almost to the close of his business career. This, although a late example of his work, is exceptionally choice, both in quality and design. The arch, being a novelty at this period,—the date of the clock cannot be later than 1720, and may be even a few years prior to this,—is used on all four sides, instead of the usual front and back only. The wood is walnut, of a fine golden colour, and the terminals, and other brasswork of the case, are all finely chased and gilt. Both from its rare detail and its fine quality, this is an exceptional and valuable clock.

Fig. 473.

ENGRAVED BACK-PLATE OF A BRACKET CLOCK BY JOHN FROMANTEEL, LONDON.

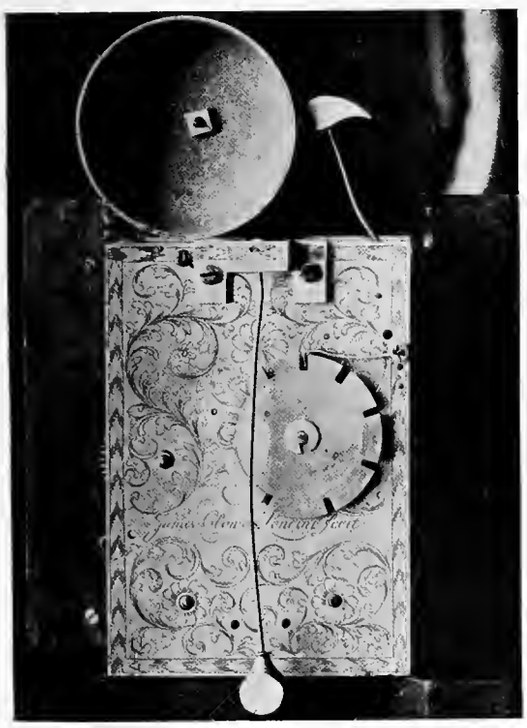


Fig. 474.

ENGRAVED BACK-PLATE OF A BRACKET CLOCK BY JAMES CLOWES, LONDON.

As this book has been written for the information, primarily, of the collector, it would be idle to trace the bracket clock beyond about

Fig. 475.

CARTEL CLOCK.

In carved and gilt pine case.
Date about 1735

1760, after which date, although patterns of cases multiply rapidly, specimens are rarely worthy of the attention of the discriminating connoisseur. We can conclude this review with two further styles of case, the plain or inverted bell-top, as in Fig. 469, and the true bell-top,—also usually the true bracket clock,—as in Figs. 470 and 471. Fig. 469 has a red lacquer case, but this type is more frequently found veneered with richly figured walnut, and very charming these walnut clocks are when style and proportions are correct. Fig. 470 is a late example of the bell-top case, and Fig. 471 is a similar clock on an earlier bracket of the George I period. Fig. 472 is the elaborated edition of the same late bell-top style. Cases of this description usually contain complicated chiming and musical clocks, and were frequently made for the Spanish market. Figs. 473 and 474 show the ornate back-plates usual in these early bracket clocks up to about 1740–50. The latter is the earlier type of the two, shown by the outside locking plate ; the former is a pull-repeater only. The simple light bob pendulum on each should be noted, as the heavy disc type is only found on bracket movements after 1790. The early pendulums are also direct ; that is, they are not "crutched," and are not detachable. By reason of their light weight they are very susceptible to vibration or jarring, and are easily deranged in consequence, which accounts for the fact that so many were converted to the heavy disc form at a later date. From the collector's point of view, however, such conversion, although improving the time-keeping qualities of the clock, diminishes its value as a genuine specimen of late seventeenth or eighteenth-century horology.

Mural or Cartel Clocks.

Mural or Cartel clocks present so many types that space is lacking to consider them here in detail, especially as they have been illustrated in some variety in "*English Domestic Clocks*." The elaborate wall clock, such as Fig. 475, is an interesting and decorative possession, however, and these carved and gilded wood cases present the closest equivalent to the true Chippendale case. The date of this example is about 1735; its proper habitat one of the tall pine-panelled rooms of the early Georgian era.

Brass "Bird-cage" or Lantern Clocks.

The "lantern" clock is the direct progenitor of the so-called "bracket" clock, and illustrates the misleading character of the latter name, as the unconverted "lantern" cannot go other than on a bracket, owing to the space required for the long—or "royal"—pendulum and the fall of the weights, whereas the "bracket" clock will go equally well on a shelf or a table,—hence the name of "table" clock, generally used in the eighteenth-century design books. Fig. 476 shows one of these early lantern—or "bird-cage" clocks,—to employ another name used at the time when they were made,—with its long pendulum and weights complete.

Lantern clocks have certain peculiarities which seldom vary. The "train" is nearly always one of three wheels from main (in this case the wheel over which the weight-cord runs) to escape. Eight-day clocks of this form, although exceedingly rare, are known. Figs. 477 to 479 illustrate a fine miniature clock by Edward East having this duration. Fig. 477 shows the finely engraved brass case, which is water gilt; Fig. 479 has the side door removed, and the four-wheel train of the eight-day clock can be seen. As this illustration of the clock is from the back, i.e. the pendulum side, the going train is on the right, the striking train being always at the back in these

Fig. 476.
"THOS. TRAFFORD, FECIT."
30-hour Brass, Striking Lantern Clock.
Date 1660-70.

Fig. 477.
Front View.

Fig. 478.
Side view showing the engraving of the case.

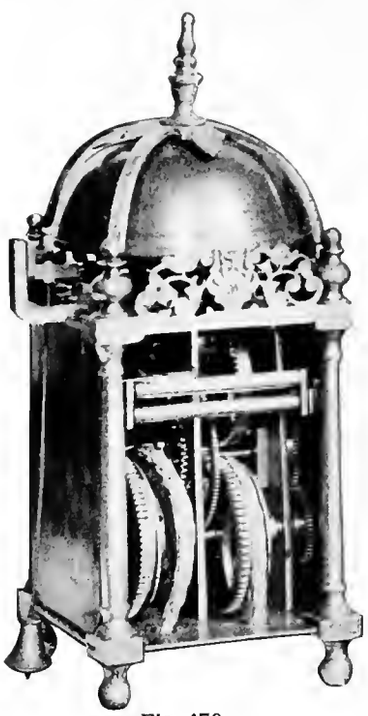


Fig. 479.
Side view showing door removed. The 8-day train of four wheels can be seen.

EDUARDUS EAST, LONDINI, FECIT.

8-day Miniature Striking Lantern Clock, with finely engraved brass and mercury-gilt case.
Chased frets. Unique example.
8 ins. high over all, by $3\frac{3}{8}$ ins. wide, by $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. deep.

Date about 1660.

Fig. 480.

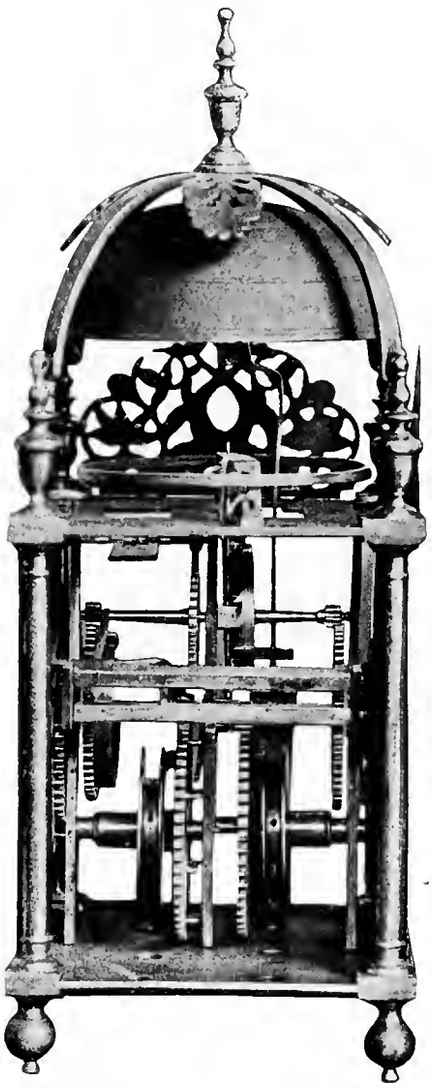


Fig. 481

WM. PAYNE, IN EAST SMITHFIELD.

30-hour Brass Lantern Striking Clock.

Balance-wheel control.

Very rare example.

15¾ ins. high over all, by 6¼ ins. wide,

by 5¾ ins. deep.

1 in. hour circle.

Date 1618.

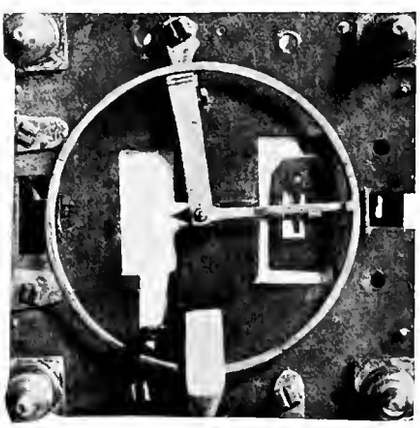


Fig. 482.

Fig. 483.

Fig. 484.

EDUARDUS EAST, LONDINI, FECIT.

30-hour Brass Lantern Clock.

1660.

lantern clocks. The two cross-bars actuate the hammer-tail, naturally from the striking side of the movement.

The second peculiarity of these clocks consists in this planting of the one train behind the other, just referred to. Long or short pendulums appear to have been a matter of fancy on the part of the maker, but, in the case of clocks prior to about 1670–5, the pendulums themselves are conversions, the original escapement being a large balance-wheel placed horizontally under the large bell. Fig. 482 shows a balance escapement in situ, photographed from above, and Fig. 480 is the clock itself, shown in side view, with the doors removed, in Fig. 481. The wheel oscillates in the same way as the balance of a watch, only, naturally, much more slowly. With each oscillation, it strikes against the " potence bar " shown in the illustration. The holes left by the removal of this " potence " are always to be seen in an early, converted, lantern clock. Original balance-

wheel lantern clocks are exceedingly rare. I have only seen two, and have heard of a third, as the result of years of examination of these early clocks.

Figs. 483 and 484 are two views of a fine early example, the weights carried on chains instead of plaited cords, and possessing the early characteristic of a clock of high quality, the simple pierced hand, the narrow hour circle, the engraved dial-plate and side doors and the chased frets. The clock is signed across the dial immediately under the hour ring "Eduardus East, Londini."

Fig. 485.
JOHN CRUCIFEX, LONDON.
A late example with a minute hand.
c. 1710–15.

Fig. 486.
LANTERN CLOCK WITH HERALDIC FRET.
1660–70.

For the collector, several points must be stated in connection with these lantern clocks. They were made, especially in remote country villages, as late as the end of the eighteenth century, many of the early characteristics being repeated over and over again. An early clock should not only possess the character of its time; it should be fine in workmanship, and signed by a London maker. I have never seen a 1670 clock of good character with a provincial maker's name upon it. A minute hand, with its minute motion-work, is always a later addition. If the minute wheels under the dial are original (in any case an old minute hand would be used) the clock is later than 1695–1700. Fig. 485 is a minute-hand clock by John Crucifex, London, and is probably later, or at best only a few years prior to the date of his C.C., 1712. The frets above the dial, if original, are some indication of date, but these were copied at all periods, from 1710 to the present day. (I believe there is a thriving factory, in or near Birmingham,

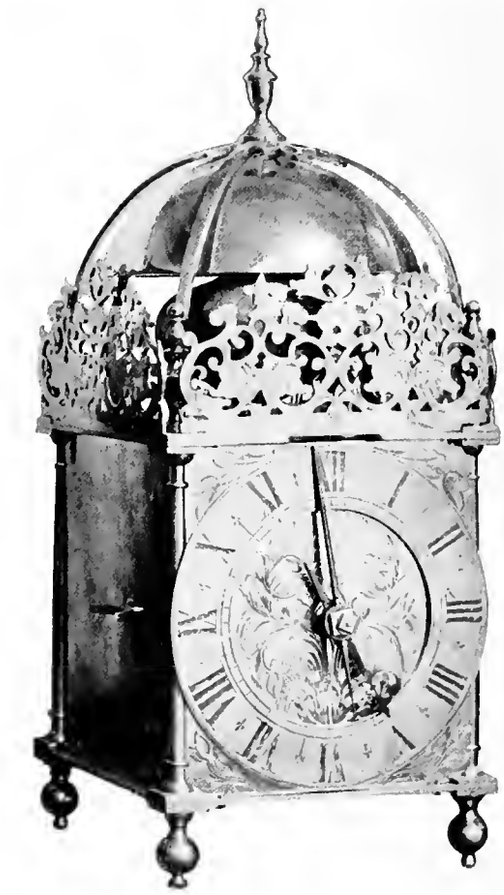


Fig. 487.
JOHN BOWYER, LONDON.
Lantern Clock chiming on 10 bells.
c. 1660.

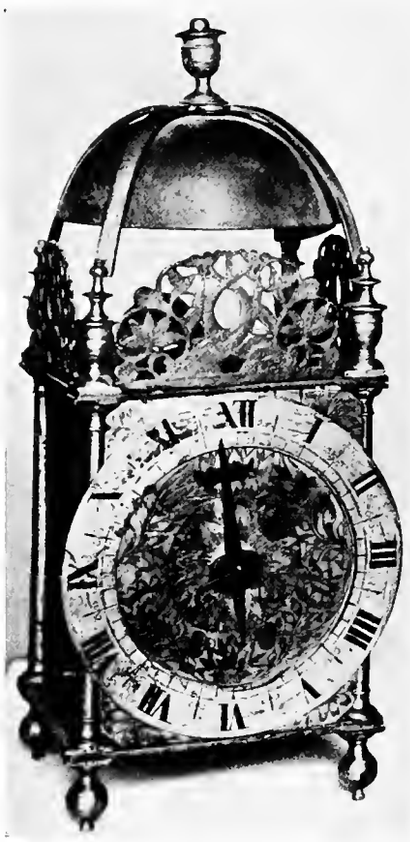


Fig. 488.
LANTERN CLOCK WITH DOLPHIN FRETS.
An example converted from a balance to pendulum control. 1660.

which specialises in the manufacture of " old " lantern clocks.) The earliest is the heraldic or armorial fret, as on Fig. 486. Fig. 487, a fine clock by John Bowyer, chiming on a nest of ten bells and striking on the large one, shows the elaborate type of this fret. Fig. 488 exhibits the dolphin fret of 1675–1695, with an early type of hand. Fig. 489, to conclude these examples, illustrates types of lantern-clock hands from Mr. Richard Arnold's collection, and Figs. 490 *et seq.* show examples of the hands from early long-case clocks.

It is almost impossible to state values of these lantern clocks, as not only do prices tend to appreciate, but so much depends upon quality, original state, size (miniature lantern clocks up to 9 ins. in total height are valuable), and points which make examples rare. Thus a clock with its original balance intact, and otherwise of good quality, is

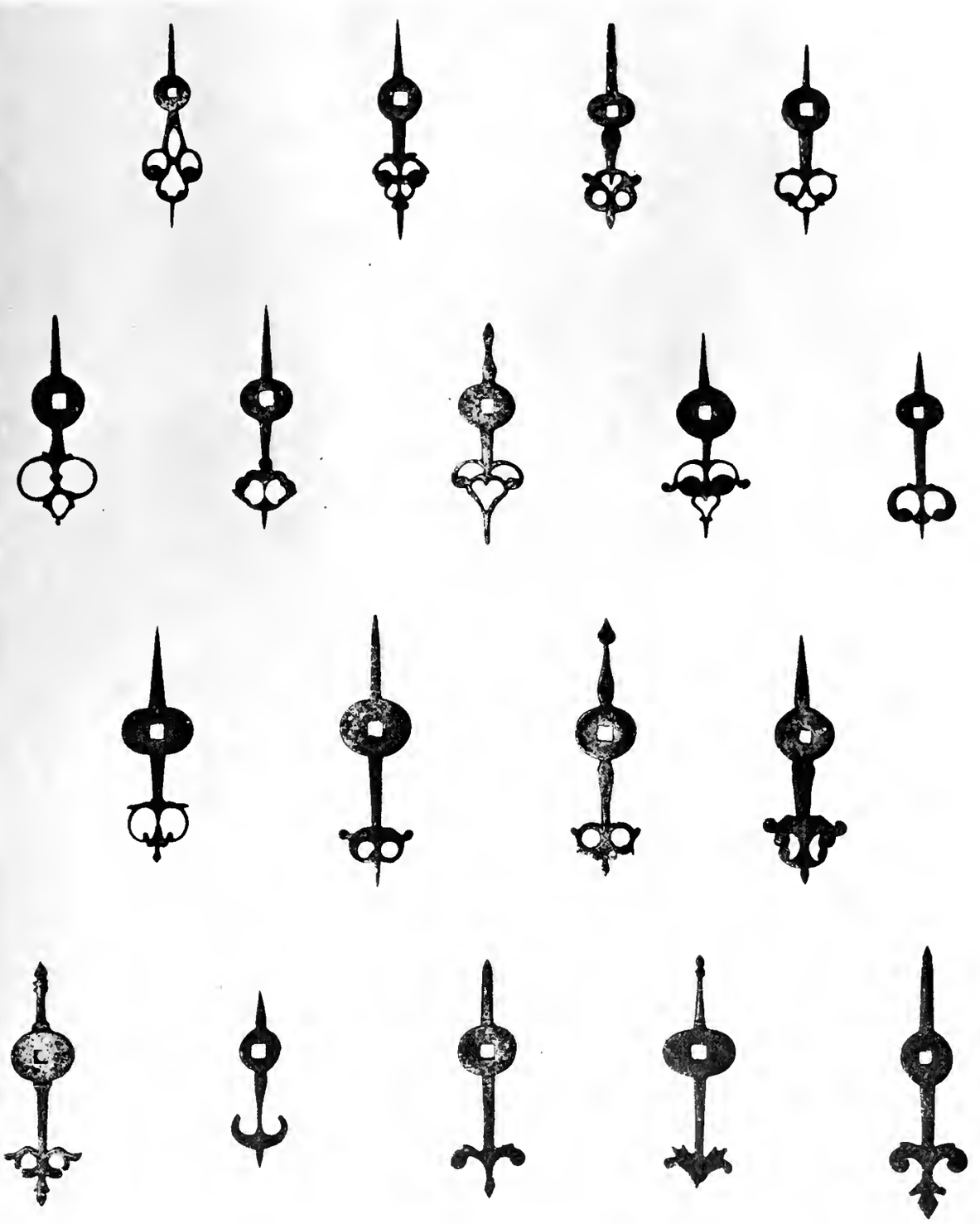


Fig. 489.
EXAMPLES OF LANTERN CLOCK HANDS.

Collection of Richard Arnold, Esq.

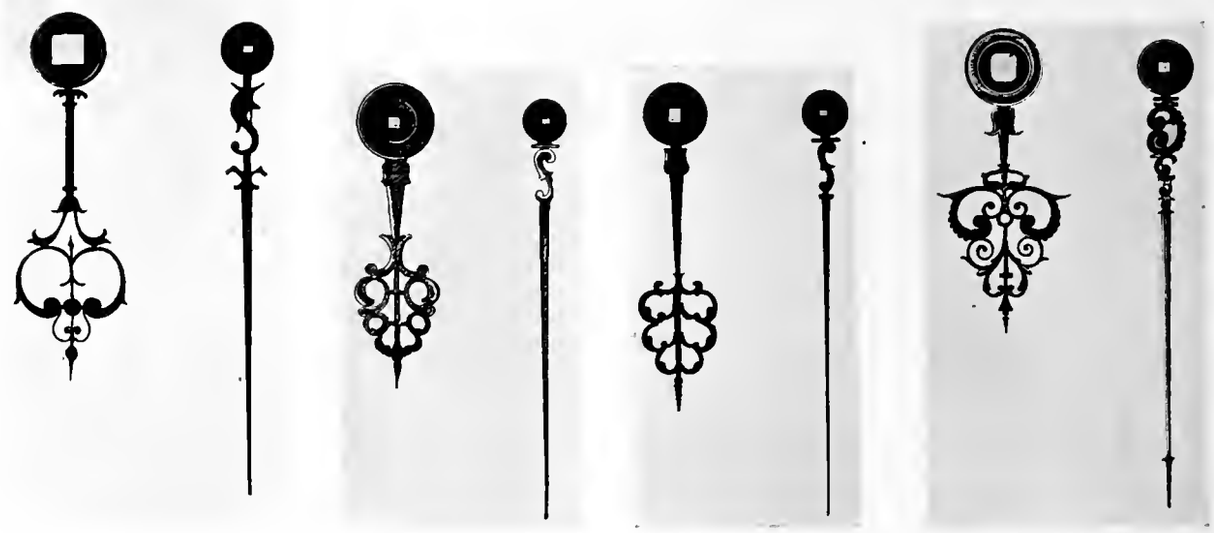


Fig. 490. Fig. 491. Fig. 492. Fig. 493.

EXAMPLES OF HANDS FROM LONG-CASE CLOCKS.

easily worth £80 to £100; the same clock with a pendulum,—especially if it be a short one,—would be dear at £25. The tiny East clock (it is only 8 ins. high to the top of its spire) with its engraved and gilt case, and eight-day duration, would realise as much as £200 at a Christie auction.

At the other extreme, a common late clock is worthless; a few shillings even may

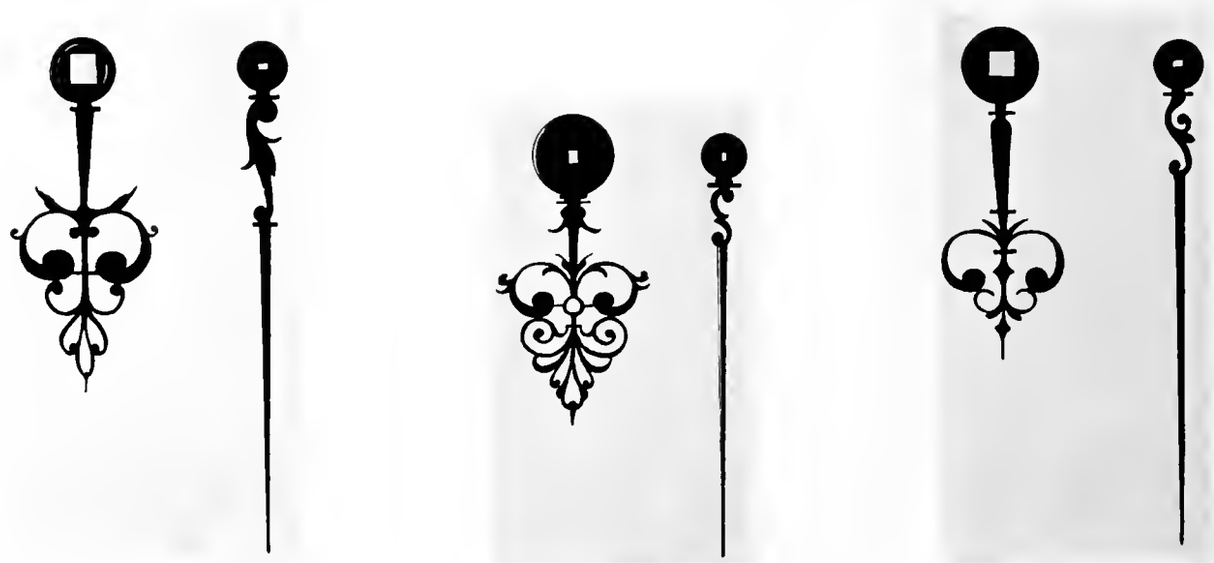


Fig. 494. Fig. 495. Fig. 496.

EXAMPLES OF HANDS FROM LONG-CASE CLOCKS.

Fig. 497.

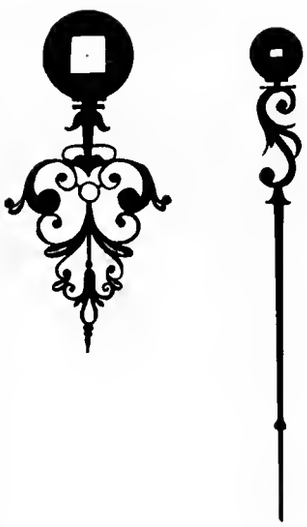


Fig. 498.

Fig. 499.

EXAMPLES OF HANDS FROM LONG-CASE CLOCKS.

be thrown away on it. To the clock collector, and indeed to the collector of furniture in its widest sense, three items of advice may be useful. These are: (1) Don't be in a hurry. (2) Don't begrudge a good price if the article be really fine. (3) Don't buy rubbish at any price. A fourth caution might be added, namely, to acquire the requisite knowledge before commencing to collect, but this should have been put at the beginning of this chapter rather than at its conclusion.

Two examples of the quaint labels sometimes found pasted to the inside of trunk doors of long-case clocks.

ALL SORTS OF CLOCKS AND WATCHES
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Orders taken at the Sign of the King's Head, at Chigwell, the White Hart, at Woodford Town, the George, at Enfield Town, the Two Brewers, at Ponders End, Mr. Chapell's, Shopkeeper, at Loughton, Mr. Colecloth's, Marsh Street, Walthamstow, Mr. Kirby's, the end of Wood Street, Walthamstow, and at his house at Tottenham.

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Chapter VII.

English Lacquer Work.

THE history of English lacquer is merely a continuation, or rather a divergence, from the main stem of the Oriental work itself, and to illustrate the progress of the latter fully, in text and photograph, would occupy several volumes of the size of this book. In addition, many of the points advanced would require actual pieces for their elucidation, to be either satisfactory or convincing, and a technical description of the various processes would be desirable. In the Eastern work, we would have to consider practically the whole of the Mongolian races, and from the present day to a somewhat remote period. The difficulties of the task can be indicated by the following classification. In point of date, we know that Oriental lacquer work was made almost continuously, since the sixteenth century, from the evidence of actual examples, and there is every reason to suppose that the art is much older than this. As regards countries of origin, ultimately we must look to China. The work, however, must be studied in Korea, the Malay Peninsula, Japan, India and Persia, and if we attempt to classify the lacquer work itself, we find the flat ornament, the raised, the cut (or Coromandel) and the carved (the "coralline" or cinnabar lac being an example of the latter). As regards colouring, we find the black, the red, the yellow or buff, the green, occasionally the blue, and sometimes the gold grounds. The ornament is either simply gilded, in other pieces inlaid with solid gold, or decorated with many colours,—the polychrome lacquer. When we enter into the field of European lacquer work we still find the same classes, with others added, and the further confusion of Occidental pieces sent in the East India Companies' tea ships to be lacquered in China and Japan, as we know from a study of the old bills of lading, and actual pieces of Oriental work imported here and cut up and used in the making of European furniture. It will readily be seen, therefore, from the foregoing, that to treat of the subject in full detail is out of the question in a single chapter of this size, and we have to adopt the least objectionable method of condensing it, with due regard to such knowledge as may be useful to the collector.

We may begin by defining the terms to be used. The word "lacquer" itself is a recent innovation, or rather, has changed its significance. Even at the present day the word has a dual meaning, to describe what we know as lacquer work, and also to indicate

Fig. 500.

JAPANESE SAKÉ CUP IN RED LACQUER.
WITH DECORATION IN TWO-COLOURED GOLD.

Fig. 501.

THE REVERSE OF FIG. 500
SHOWING THE SIGNATURE.
(Ka-Ritsu-Sai. Mid-nineteenth Century.)
Tokio or Kioto.

Fig. 502.

A JAPANESE SAKÉ CUP SIMILAR TO THE ABOVE,
FRACTURED TO SHOW THE THIN COVERING LACQUER.

a protective coating of varnish used to prevent metals, such as brass or silver, from tarnishing. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the words "Jappan work," "japan" or "japaning" were indifferently used. Japanning, at the present day, is a term which has been coined to describe the rough graining and varnishing finish of cheap servants' bedroom furniture. The eighteenth-century word "japan" served to illustrate the country, or the region, from which a good deal of the lacquer was imported. Various fancy names were also used, such as "Bantam work" to describe the cut or Coromandel lacquer, a name adopted from that of a Dutch trading-station in the Malay Peninsula, which was abandoned when the settlement was removed, in 1817, to Sirang some miles further inland.

This predilection, in nearly all the older records, for the use of the name Japan instead of China, is both curious and instructive. The only actual knowledge which appears to have been possessed was that of the ports of export,—generally the Dutch trading-stations, such as Bantam,—from whence the tea ships received their lading. Even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, China must have been a *terra incognita*, other than to a few adventurous travellers. Even the name itself is seldom mentioned. Here and there we find a reference to the Empire of Cathay, but of the inner life and productions of this vast country little or nothing appears to have been known. It is not surprising, therefore, that the difference between the work of China and Japan,—very different from the Oriental,—especially in the case of lacquer work, was not apprehended, and, with the exception of certain names which were coined to express it, in various of the Eastern ports, the term "Jappan work" is the one nearly always employed in the inventories and bills of lading of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

For our present purpose, however, it will be better, and more convenient, to use the words "lacquer" and "lacquering" in spite of any dual significance which they may possess. The preparation of these lacquer grounds consists in the application of numerous coats of protective varnishes, either black or stained with colours. In the European work the ground is nearly always applied in flat colours, of somewhat brighter hues than the finished effect which is desired, to allow for the toning caused by the many coats of varnish, which, however clear, are always more or less tinged with yellow. Much of the Chinese work, especially the late Ming or early Manchu, other than the black or the Cinnabar, is first prepared on the underlying soft pine, with a flat grey ground, over which stained varnishes are applied in a manner similar to the "scumbling" of the decorator.

There are several conditions which render the Eastern lacquer not only superior, but also impossible of imitation by any methods of the West. The lac itself is an exudation of a native tree (Tsi),[1] *Rhus vernicifera* or *Rhus succedanea*,—both varieties of the Sumach,—which when fresh, can be thinned down to any consistency, but when exposed to the air, hardens and cannot then be attacked by any solvents which we possess, even one so drastic as spirit-of-wine. This property of permanently hardening on exposure to the air renders the export of the raw Chinese lac nearly an impossibility.

[1] In Japan the Urushi tree, from the fruit of which vegetable wax is derived.

Fig. 503.

JAPANESE CABINET IN BLACK LACQUER.

Raised gold decoration.
Mounted on carved and gilt stand of English make.
Mid-eighteenth century. Herbert Cescinsky, Esq.

Fig. 504.

CABINET OF ENGLISH LACQUER ON CARVED AND SILVERED STAND.

Date about 1670–80. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Climate plays an important part in the successful application of the lacquer itself. Cold winds, or humidity of the atmosphere, will cause the varnish to chill and lose its transparency (it will be remarked that even in a finely prepared and finished coach panel, where as many as twenty coats of varnish have been used, there is never any real depth in the colour itself), and stoving or working in a heated room makes the avoidance of tiny air bubbles almost an impossibility. Modern European lacquer (so called) where a fine even finish has been produced, is nearly always shellac dissolved in spirit-of-wine, applied with the rubber instead of the brush, on a black or coloured ground, or, in other words, what is generally known as "French polishing." It lacks the hard brightness of varnish (difficult to explain, but quite unmistakable to one whose eye has been trained to observe the two) and has nothing of its elasticity. A polish finish is always "short," —to use the decorator's term,—and liable to crack or craze, especially when applied on

Fig. 505.
THE CABINET, FIG. 504, SHOWN OPEN.

a slow-drying painted ground which is always slightly expanding or contracting with variations of temperature.

Lacquer, therefore, which has been coated on in a hot climate, commences with an initial advantage. The preservative qualities of the Chinese or Japanese lac are extraordinary. Large pieces, such as screen panels, are made from soft wood, often in two or more pieces jointed together with small square-sectioned dowels, but without the use of any adhesive, yet finished with these fine lacquered grounds they defy our Western extremes of climate for centuries, if the surface of the lac be unbroken. Stripped of this coating, these large screens would fall to pieces, or would warp or split, in a few weeks.

If the Chinese lacquer, especially that of early Manchu period (K'hang H'si, 1661–1721) or of the late Ming dynasty, is remarkable for its artistic spirit, that of Japan, especially of the late seventeenth century, is equally notable for its sheer perfection of finish. Grounded on the Chinese art, as much of that of Japan undoubtedly was, the Japanese, not only as imitators, but even as creators, often excelled their Chinese teachers. It is customary to despise much of this work, especially in collecting circles, and to stigmatise it contemptuously, as "Japanese," forgetting that the actual artistic conceptions, and especially the careful workmanship and skill displayed, even in the case of commercial pieces, are truly extraordinary. With signed pieces, made for Japanese notables, the high quality of the lacquered grounds is remarkable. In tiny *saké* cups the perfection of finish is incomprehensible to the European. There is no sign anywhere of contact before the lacquer was dry; it is as if these small bowls were prepared while invisibly suspended in the air.

Figs. 500 and 501 show the front and back views of one of these fine red ground *saké* cups of high grade Japanese work, measuring $3\frac{3}{8}$ ins. in diameter, the illustrations being, therefore, slightly reduced from actual size. In the centre of the back is the signature; and all the rims and edges show no sign of contact while in the process of drying. Fig. 501 is another of these bowls, fractured at an angle to show how thin and even this covering lacquer is.

Pieces of Oriental lacquer, usually small objects, were imported into England by the agency of the Dutch East India Company or the republican trading cities of Northern Italy, during the Tudor period, and in the reign of Charles I "Jappan" cabinets are referred to in inventories and, evidently, highly esteemed. The well-known square cabinets, on carved gilt stands, with doors ornamented with elaborate hinges and flat lock-plates, lacquered and decorated on both sides, and with a nest of drawers behind, were usually imported from 1650 to about 1670, after which date they were copied,

Fig. 506.

CABINET OF ENGLISH BLACK LACQUER ON CARVED GILT STAND.

6 ft. high by 4 ft. wide.
Date about 1690.

Lord Willoughby de Broke.

Fig. 507.
CABINET OF ENGLISH BLACK LACQUER ON CARVED GILT STAND.
7 ft. 4 ins. high by 3 ft. 3 ins. wide by 1 ft. 7 ins. deep.
Date about 1700. Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

Fig. 508.

THE CABINET, FIG. 507, SHOWN OPEN.

with modifications, by the artisans in this country. The English lac, however, differs very materially from the Oriental, not only in execution but also in method, the grounds being prepared, as a rule, in varnishes,—from the resinous *coccus lacca*,—instead of the Chinese and Japanese insoluble *Tsi*.

Of these square Oriental cabinets, those from Japan as well as China were also mounted on English or French stands, and, in the absence of a knowledge which allows of the work of the one country being distinguished from that of the other, it may be worth while to point out one characteristic which the Japanese cabinets nearly always have, and which the Chinese do not possess. Fig. 503 is one of these Japanese cabinets, of the mid-eighteenth century, and it will be noticed that the cabinet rests on a cut-out bracket plinth, or, more properly, on four stump feet. The open spaces, between, have been filled, at a later date, and in this country, with backboards, or " aprons," to give a solid appearance to the whole piece. This cabinet was made to stand on the floor, which is the customary seat of the Japanese, to whom chairs or stools were unknown at this period. The Chinese, on the other hand, possessed both, from the simple seat, to the mandarin, princely or imperial throne or chair of state. The Japanese eye-level, therefore, when seated, is on a plane nearly three feet lower than that of China, and while, to our Western notions, these cabinets appear correct when mounted on a stand such as this, to Japanese eyes they are unnecessarily and even incongruously elevated. It must not be assumed, however, that a cabinet without these stump feet, is necessarily Chinese.

These Oriental square cabinets, usually with raised and gilded ornament on a black ground, were freely copied in this country during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and with varying success. In no instance is the English lacquer comparable, in point of workmanship, with either the Chinese or the Japanese, but this is not remarkable, considering the natural advantages possessed by the Oriental, to which previous reference has been made. This in no wise prevented the publication of text-books on the subject of " lackering," such as the folio of Stalker and Parker (John Stalker " of the Golden Ball " and George Parker " of Oxford ") which appeared in 1688 with the grandiose title " *A Treatise of Japaning and Varnishing. Being the Compleat Discovery of those Arts, with The best way of making all sorts of Varnish for Japan, Wood, Prints and Pictures, The Method of Guilding, Burnishing, and Lackering with the Art of Guilding, Separating and Refining Metals, etc. etc.*"

Apart from its quaint and amusing character, showing that the wealthy public must have been as gullible, in the seventeenth century, as they have been at many periods since, and in spite of the " Compleat Discovery " as announced on the title page,

there is little, if anything, in the book which is not common knowledge to an ordinary coach-painter. There is one remark, however, which is worth quoting here, as possessing a significance which will be apparent at a later stage in this chapter. The author refers to "*Some who have made new Cabinets out of Old Skreens; and from that large old piece, by the help of a Joyner, make little ones, such as Stands or Tables, but never consider the situation of their figures; so that in these things so torn and hacked to joint a new fancie you may observe the finest hodg-podg and medley. . . .*"

Of the square cabinets of European workmanship, before referred to, the one shown in Figs. 504 and 505, although not of the highest quality, may be taken as typical. The stand is now silvered, but this is later work, although nearly all the original Charles II so-called gilt stands were silvered, and then overlaid with gold lacquers to imitate gilding. Very little of this Restoration work has persisted to our day in its pristine state, however. At a later period, from about 1680 to 1690, it became the custom to add a cresting of carved gilt pine, placed on the cabinet without fixing of any kind. Of these crested cabinets Figs. 506 and 507 may be taken as typical, the first of about 1690, the second of the end of the seventeenth or the first years of the eighteenth century. In both the carved stands are not only heavily prepared for gilding, the carving is actually finished, as far as the

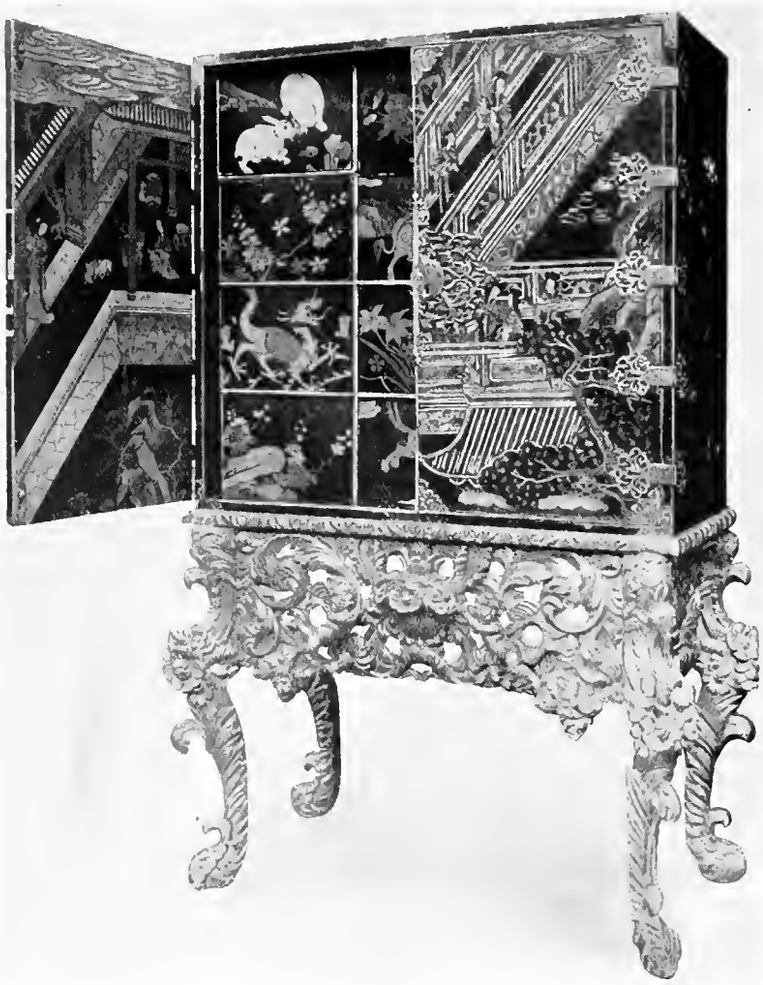

Fig. 509.

CHINESE LACQUERED CABINET ON CARVED GILT STAND.

5 ft. 8 ins. high by 3 ft. 4 ins. wide by 1 ft. 6 ins. deep.
Date about 1680.
Messrs. Gregory and Co.

finer details are concerned, in this thick coating of size and whiting. This is the usual method, and accounts for the fact that when this preparation is either badly damaged or stripped entirely, the fine veinings disappear with it.

While the square cabinets of Japanese origin are by no means uncommon, those of Chinese workmanship are exceedingly rare. This can be accounted for, in a large measure, by the fact that the square cabinet on dwarfed feet, such as the upper part of Fig. 503, is a complete Japanese piece in itself, whereas such an article of furniture is unknown in China, the equivalent being a standing cupboard, sometimes with two tall doors, more often with four, one tier above the other. A peculiarity of the Chinese

Fig. 510.

TWELVE-FOLD CHINESE SCREEN (ONE HALF).

Incised, polychrome and sanded ornament on a semi-transparent ground of brown lacquer.
Dated, on reverse, 1671. J. Herrmann, Esq.

double door is that a fixed meeting style,—really the broad edge of a vertical central partition,—is provided, and in the centre of this a projecting eyelet is fixed, with two others, to correspond, fixed to the doors themselves. To secure the doors it is only necessary to pass a skewer through the three eyelets. No actual locking security is achieved by this means, of course, but apparently none is demanded. This form of cupboard is quite unsuited for placing on a carved stand, nor is it possible to cut it in two carcases, laterally, as either the bottom of the upper part, or the top of the lower, would have to be sacrificed. A square cabinet, complete in itself, of actual Chinese make, would only be possible in the case where such a piece was directly commissioned from Europe, and until almost the middle of the eighteenth century, intercourse direct

Fig. 511.
THE OTHER HALF OF THE CHINESE SCREEN, FIG. 510.

with China was too spasmodic or irregular to render such pieces plentiful in any way. Cabinets which have been made in Europe, from Chinese screens which have been cut up, although still rare, are not so scarce,—nor so valuable. Fig. 509 is one of these, evidently of the kind referred to by Stalker and Parker in 1688. The doors and the fronts of the drawers inside have been frankly cut from screen panels or folds. The brass mounts, and the carcase-work of the cabinet itself are of English workmanship. The lacquer here is of the cut or Coromandel kind (known at the time as "Bantam work") in polychrome on a black ground, and is somewhat earlier than the date of the cabinet itself, although still of the Manchu dynasty. It has the freedom and bold drawing which is rare in the lacquer of Ch'ien-lung or later.

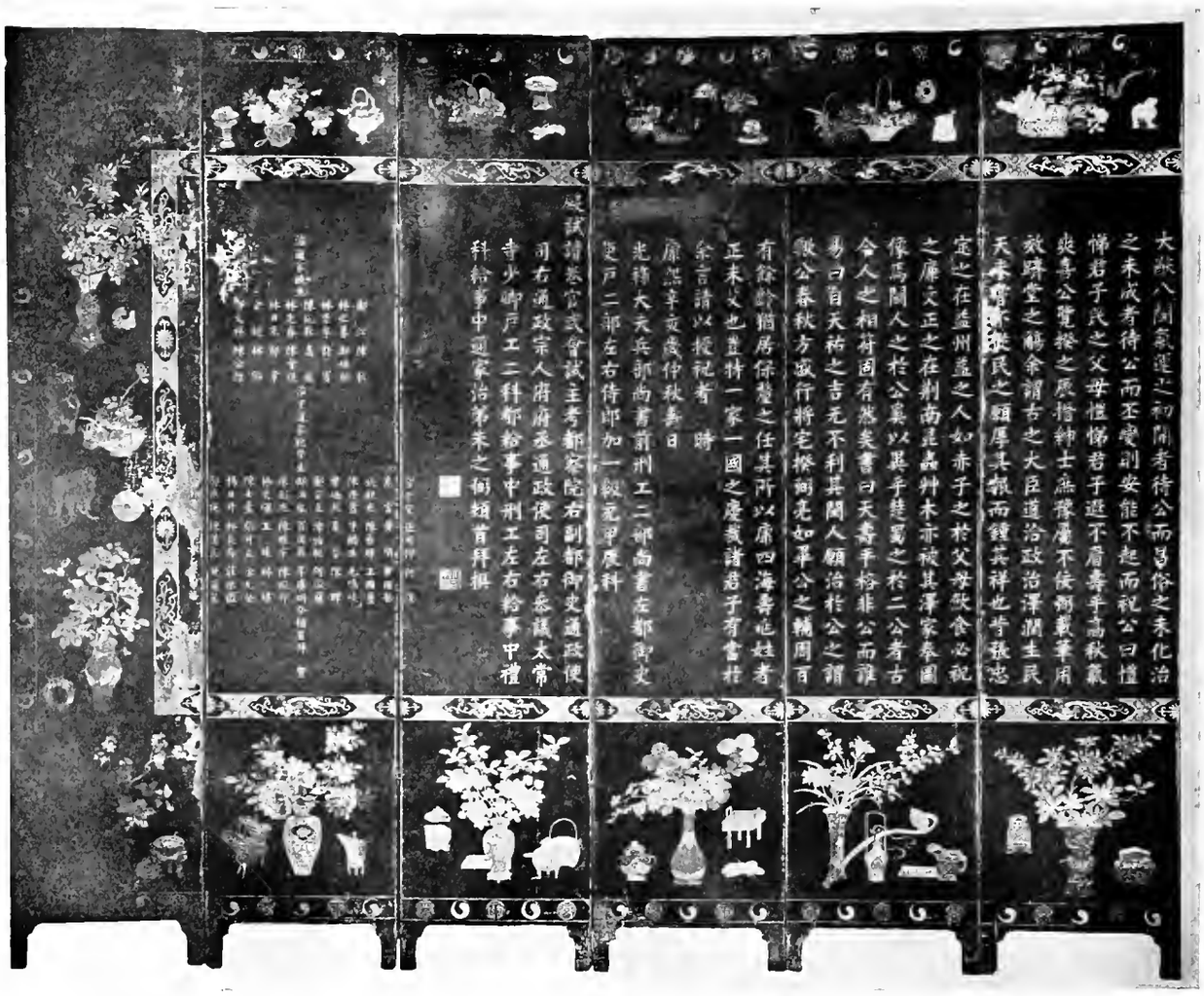

Fig. 512.
ONE HALF OF THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE SCREEN, FIGS. 510 AND 511.
The date 1671, and the names of the donors are recorded here.

The early Manchu work can be best studied in the large Chinese screens which were imported into this country in the early eighteenth century, and which were, formerly, far more plentiful, some twenty or thirty years ago, than is the case at the present day. In Figs. 510 to 513 one of these, of magnificent quality and exceptional interest, is illustrated. The ornament is incised in the lacquer itself, decorated in polychrome on a sanded ground, and with the exception of the heavy vermilion, the original colours are almost intact. The groundwork is a thick, semi-transparent brown lacquer glazed over a grey ground. The wood is a soft pine, each fold in two sections, dowelled together without adhesive, and preserved only by the air-excluding properties of the lacquer. On the reverse side, shown in Figs. 512 and 513, is a long inscription, in flowery Chinese, recording the fact that the screen was presented, in 1671 (the second year of

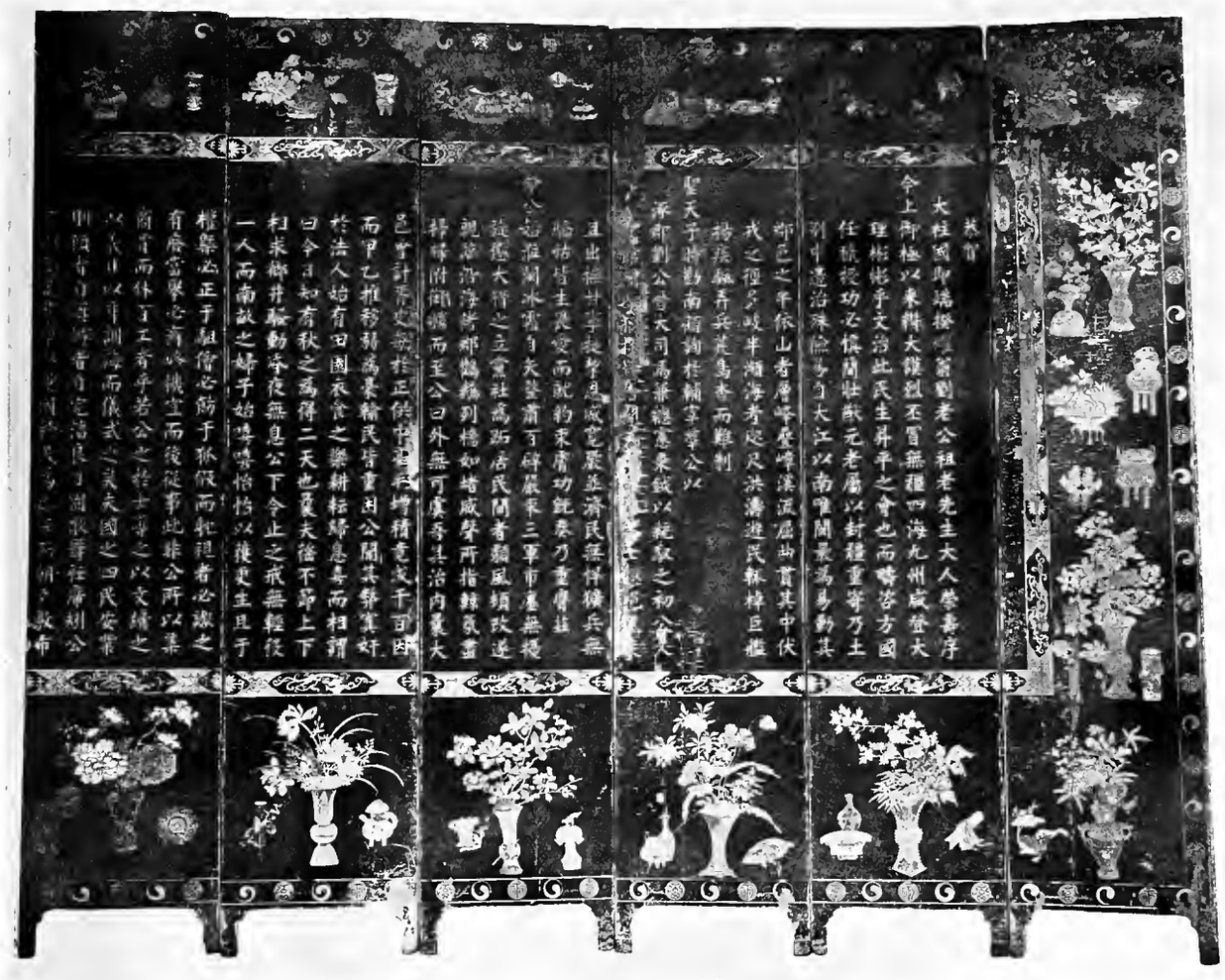

Fig. 513.

THE OTHER HALF OF THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE SCREEN, FIGS. 510 AND 511.

K'hang-h'si) to a Chinese professor by his pupils, whose names are set out on the extreme left of Fig. 512. Each fold is joined to its fellow by primitive pin-hinges, two to each panel, which can be seen in Fig. 511. This is the Chinese method, the fixed hinge with a closed and riveted knuckle being entirely a Western idea.

Many of these Chinese screens, especially those of the later eighteenth century, while possessing very little of the freedom and vivid draughtsmanship of the early Manchu work, and especially of the later Ming, almost atone by their careful detail and magnificent craftsmanship. Figs. 514 and 515 illustrate one of these, and it will be seen that one side is as lavishly decorated as the other. There is, practically, no reverse side, and the intricacy of the whole design is amazing.

While in perfection of finish and detail of drawing, much of this Chinese work, and even that of Japan, is unapproached by any efforts of Western artists, occasional examples can be found which are much in advance of the usual lacquer of the time, and here the hands of Dutch or Flemish artists are strongly indicated. One of these is a table plateau,

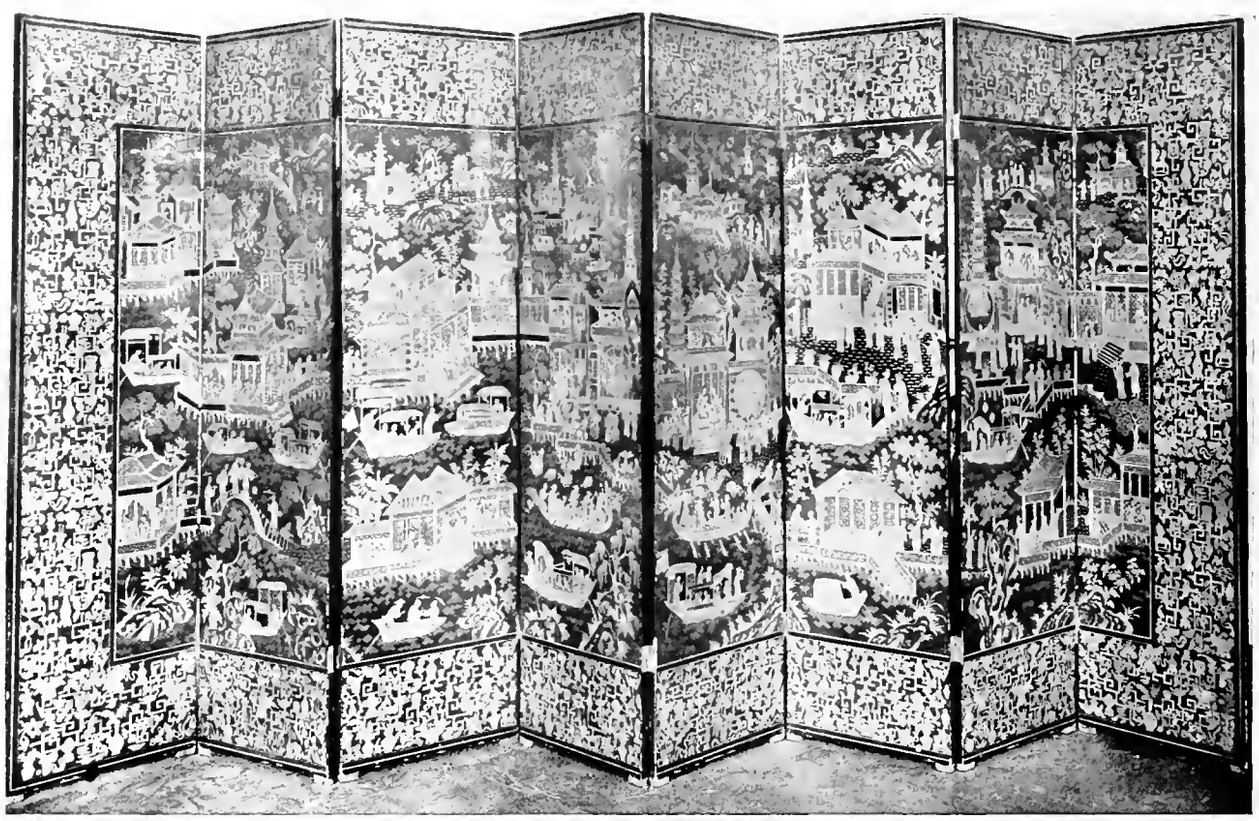

Fig. 514.

EIGHTFOLD CHINESE SCREEN (FRONT VIEW).

Late eighteenth century. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

in four sections, from the collection of Lord Leverhulme, shown here in Figs. 516 and 517. The detail is in brown on a black ground, the work of amazing quality, with foliage and figures of birds and squirrels executed with a fineness of detail worthy of Gerard Douw at his best. The border is formal, consisting of long and short panels decorated with tinsel colours. The rims and the small claw-and-ball feet are of silver. The work is, approximately, of mid-eighteenth-century date, but its nationality is debatable.

The rage, just prior to the publication of Chippendale's "Director" in 1754, was for the "Chinese Taste," as it was styled. The finest examples of this period, that is, exhibiting the greatest fidelity to the Chinese originals, are to be found in the glass pictures, not those where a print has been transferred to the glass and the paper carefully rubbed away (which should be despised by any true collector), but where the picture is actually painted on the glass from behind. Many of these, such as Fig. 518, have considerable merit and a value quite distinct from their rarity. So fine are the best of them, in execution, that they are frequently mistaken for actual Oriental work, although to one acquainted with Chinese forms and conventions their European origin should

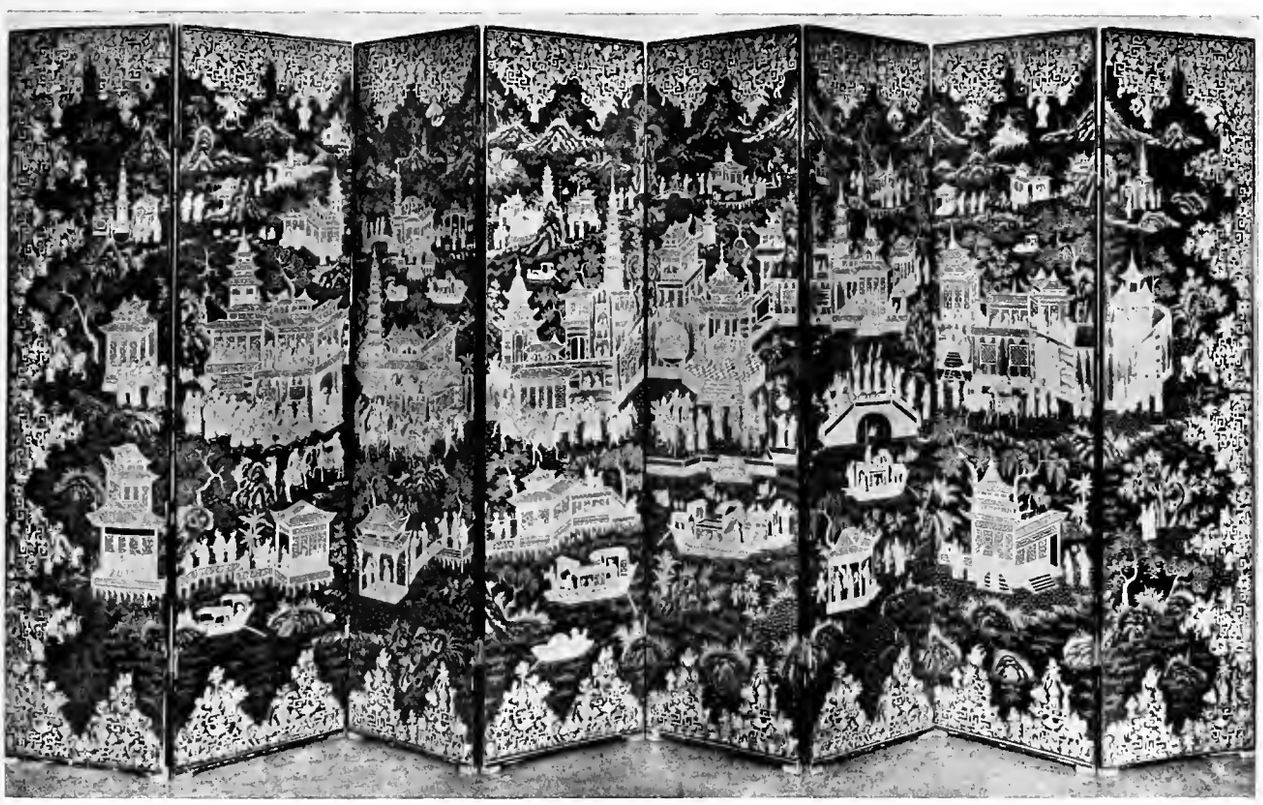

Fig. 515.

THE REVERSE OF THE CHINESE SCREEN, FIG. 514.

Fig. 516.

TABLE PLATEAU, IN BROWN DECORATION ON A BLACK LACQUER GROUND.

Mounted with silver rims and feet.

Date about 1750. The Rt. Hon. Lord Leverhulme.

Fig. 517.

A SECTION OF THE TABLE PLATEAU SHOWN ABOVE.

be, at once, apparent. In lacquered frames, of half-round section, with a small gilt fillet or hollow dividing the frame from the glass, they make extremely effective pictures, especially in a low deal-panelled Georgian room.

In considering these imitations of the Chinese, either in drawing or technical excellence, we have diverged somewhat from the progression of English lacquer-work, although there is little, if any, of the order which can be traced as in other furniture, English in inspiration as well as origin. With the square cabinets from 1670 to about 1720 there is little indication of date beyond the details of the stands themselves. Thus we can place the charming green lac cabinet shown in Fig. 519 at about 1690 by this detail alone. The ornament is good and well executed, on a ground of apple green, and the stand has the C-scrolled legs and flat stretcher which we associate with the reign of William III. This cabinet had rather an adventurous history. Bought in Sussex, it was dispatched to America, where in the extremes of climate of the Eastern States it would, probably, have been doomed in a few years. It remained in America, however, only a few hours. It was purchased almost as soon as it arrived, sent back to England, and now adorns one of the drawing-rooms in Dudley House, Sir John Ward's mansion in Park Lane.

The cabinet shown in Figs. 520 and 521 dates from the reign of George I, the carved stand being a free adaptation from French sources. The ground is a red lacquer, with ornament raised in gold, well drawn and executed. This example closes the series of cabinets on gilded stands, the fashion after about 1745 being to design the stand to accord with the cabinet, and to lacquer it to correspond.

Fig. 518.
PICTURE PAINTED ON GLASS (ENGLISH) IN THE CHINESE TASTE.
2 ft. 8 ins. high by 1 ft. 10½ ins. wide.
Date about 1750.

The Chinese cabinets, now so rare, were obviously accepted as models by the English artists, and the time when they were imported coincides with the best period of the English work. It is not the fact that, with the development of the fashion, greater skill in execution followed as a natural course. Not only is the taste displayed in the eighteenth-century lacquer work of a lower order than was manifested in the late seventeenth, but the time which was necessary to produce a fine ground was also begrudged. It is from 1670 to about 1700 that the finest English lacquer-work was produced, in all probability by the Dutch artists of this period who were domiciled in the East Anglian counties. When we remember that the drawer sides and bottoms, both outside and inside, and the drawer cavities themselves, were always lacquered and finished with sprinkled gold dust in these early cabinets, and that the running of the drawers produced a considerable friction, it is a testimony to the quality of the lacquer work itself that it has persisted for some two hundred years with comparatively little evidence of wear.

The later lacquer, that of the closing years of the seventeenth and nearly the whole of the eighteenth century, differs from the early work in one important respect; it becomes merely an incidental decoration. The early cabinets, and even some of later date, such as those illustrated here, were specifically intended for lacquering; no alternative finish is possible if we exclude marqueterie, and even with inlay of any kind the gilt stands would have been very incongruous. During the eighteenth century, however, we find lacquer used merely as an alternative to veneering. Another important difference between the early and much of the later work is that in the latter there is little or no attempt made to produce a true lacquered ground, after the Chinese or Japanese manner; it becomes merely decorative painting and nothing more. With this work we return to familiar pieces which we have seen in earlier chapters, here lacquered instead of being veneered. It is with this work that considerable knowledge and experience is required to detect the modern copy, that is, the old and probably dilapidated piece, one which has lost much or all of its original veneer, and has been lacquered as an alternative and cheaper "restoration." In the wood, form or construction there is, obviously, nothing to guide the collector. Lacquer work of good or high quality, such as the bureau cabinet from the Victoria and Albert Museum, shown here in Fig. 522, may be regarded as above suspicion. A good red ground is rarely produced in the modern forgery. The deep sealing-wax colour, and especially the transparency, of the old work may be too costly; certainly it is rarely, if ever, imitated. Bureau cabinets with the familiar double-domed cornice of the early Queen Anne period,

especially when the lacquered ground is either green or blue, are always to be suspected, and if any evidence exist that any portion other than the lipping of the fall, which surrounds the lining of the writing bed, be veneered, then the piece can be dismissed, almost with certainty, as a forgery. One should beware, however, of rejecting any example of lacquer-work merely because it corresponds in form and detail with others

Fig. 519.

CABINET OF GREEN LACQUER, WITH GOLD DECORATION, ON A CARVED AND GILT STAND.

c. 1690. Capt. The Hon. Sir John H. Ward, K.C.V.O.

Fig. 520.

CABINET OF RED LACQUER ON A CARVED GILT STAND.

Date about 1720. C. H. F. Kinderman, Esq.

either veneered with walnut or inlaid with marqueterie; this alternative finish was frequently adopted in original work. Thus the mirror from Lyme Park, Fig. 523, is of a type usually found either veneered with walnut in oyster-pieces or inlaid with marqueterie in panels, yet is an original example of a lacquered frame, and of fine quality. With the later square cabinets, either on chest stands, such as Fig. 524, or on tables with square-sectioned legs, such as Fig. 525, we have the brass mounts as some guide, and there is also the evidence of the design itself that no other finish than lacquer is possible. When the work is of fine and costly quality, such as on Fig. 524, the piece may be accepted as original, although following the general lines of the veneered furniture of the same date.

Fig. 521.
THE CABINET, FIG. 520, SHOWN OPEN.

Fig. 522.

BUREAU CABINET IN RED LACQUER.

Date about 1700. Victoria and Albert Museum.

Fig. 523.

MIRROR WITH FRAME OF BLACK LACQUER.

Date about 1700. Capt. The Hon. Richard Legh.

The eighteenth century was essentially the age of Chinese fashions, not one, but several periods being marked by a recurrence of the Oriental taste. In the early years the art was confined to lacquer and to imitations of the Chinese paintings on glass, such as Fig. 518. Sir William Chambers carried the manner into buildings and summer houses, Chippendale and Sheraton both designed in the "Chinese Taste." Horace Walpole levelled several diatribes at the "Chinoiserie" of his age, but as he perpetrated Strawberry Hill, after having referred, scornfully, but justly, to Batty Langley's Gothic, he can scarcely be regarded as a qualified critic of style. The vogue for the Oriental ran riot eventually, as such crazes usually do, and culminated in the Pavilion at Brighton, after which comment is needless. It inaugurated, however, the taste for Chinese wall-papers, many of which are deserving of high praise, both as regard design and execution.

It is during the early Chippendale era, which may be said to commence about 1750, that this taste for Chinese forms and decoration extended to the bedroom. At this period the Chinese furniture at Badminton and elsewhere was made, where the design as well as the decoration is in the pseudo-Chinese manner as popularised by Chippendale, and especially by Matthias Darly. The wardrobe shown here in Fig. 526 is somewhat earlier than this, when the decoration was inspired from Persia or India rather than from China. In the hands of Thomas Chippendale, the Chinese forms became a design-basis rather than a mere surface decoration, his more familiar motives being the applied fret, the lattice, either in glazing bars or in open fretwork, and the pagoda. To this period belong the remarkable pair of hanging cabinets from Rainham, one of which is shown here in Fig. 527. The entire spirit of the design, as well as the superb execution, suggest the hand of Thomas Chippendale himself. Beginning each with a nucleus of four Japanese panels, which are used for the backs, these cabinets are, otherwise, entirely of English make, with the lattice of the doors and the ribs of the pagoda gilt, and the flat surfaces everywhere enriched with finely drawn ornament on a black ground. Late as these cabinets are, they represent the zenith of English lacquer, and are, truly, a remarkable pair in every respect, and may fittingly close the illustrative material both of this chapter, and the book itself.

The detection of modern lacquer-work, which has been "faked" to give an appearance of age, is a matter rather for the trained expert than for the amateur collector, as already pointed out. Such signs as texture of woods, and methods of construction, are hidden by the lacquering itself, and as quality, in the original pieces themselves, varies from the highest to the very lowest,—often a mere daubing with black or coloured paint and a crude design traced in gold or colours,—this criterion is equally of no avail. Modern

Fig. 524.

BLACK LACQUERED CABINET.

Date about 1700–5. Messrs. Gregory and Co.

work, executed within the past one or two years, can be detected by the familiar trick of rubbing the piece with the milled edge of a coin placed in a single fold of a white handkerchief,—when, if the white linen be marked by the paint of the lacquered ground, the piece is unquestionably of recent make. With spirit varnishes or shellac polishes, which dry thoroughly in a week or two, however, this test will not answer. The smell of polish or varnish, which cavities, such as drawer interiors or cupboards, harbour for a long period, is suspicious, and it is no less suspicious if artificial perfumes have been used, presumably, to hide this smell. As a general rule, however, a minute acquaintance with the technique, methods of gesso-raising, and design-forms are absolutely necessary weapons in the armoury of the expert, and these cannot be acquired other than by the examination and handling of many authentic examples, such as at Badminton and elsewhere. Nearly every ancestral house of any note contains some specimens of seventeenth and eighteenth-century lacquer, and, where opportunity presents itself, these should be carefully examined and studied at leisure.

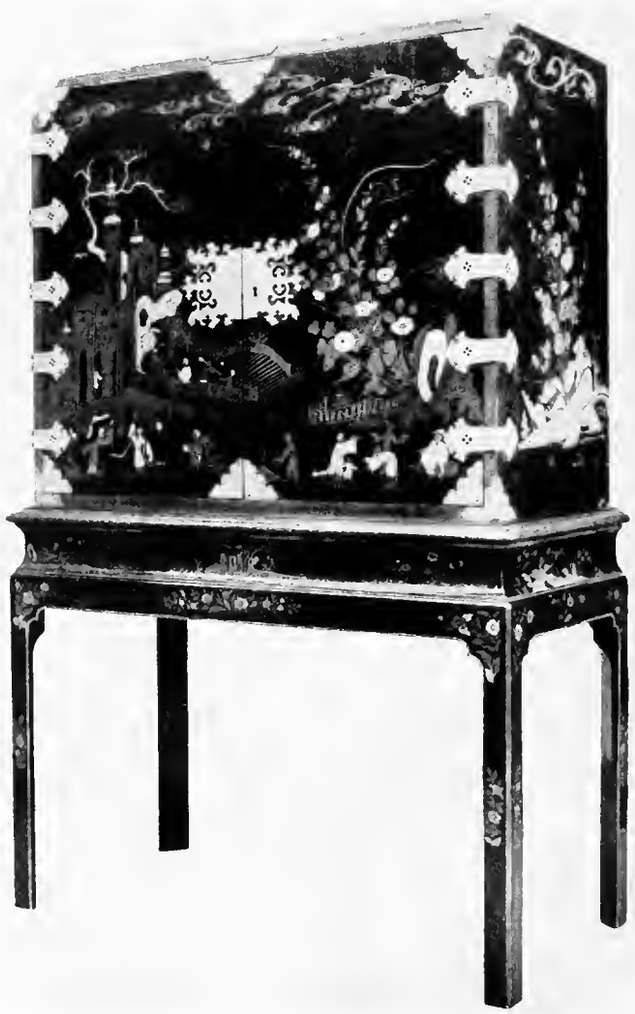

Fig 525.
BLACK LACQUERED CABINET.
Date about 1750–60.
Messrs. Gill and Reigate.

In the carved gilded stands of the square cabinets of the Stuart period, the original finish is always a gold lacquer on silver leaf, and the metal itself is always very economically used. Thus, on the back, and the parts of the ornament which are not readily seen, such as the underneath or the reverse of the pierced and carved "aprons," the wood is always left in the yellow preparation. Where the "gold" has worn on the exposed faces, as is nearly always the case, the underlying preparations

Fig. 526.

WARDROBE IN BLACK LACQUER.

Date about 1730.

should be red or yellow. Blue burnish was never used, and is always a sign of recent gilding, and, probably, of recent manufacture also, as nothing can be so quickly and easily "aged" as gilded carving.

Original metal work of the period, such as hinges and lock-plates, is always of hard brass with a considerable alloy of zinc. These hinges and lock-plates were almost invariably fixed with round-headed brass pins; rarely, if ever, with screws. If an opportunity occur of removing one of these hinge plates, the back, and the place which it has covered, may afford a good deal of evidence of age, or otherwise. The locks are nearly always of the multiple-bolt variety—from four to six bolt-tangs being quite usual,—and the key, if purporting to be original, may be carefully examined with advantage. Where a cabinet is in movable parts, such as a square one on its gilded stand, or in two or more carcases, these should be removed and examined on the touching surfaces, as such cabinet must have been moved from place to place, and this would be done piecemeal. Drawer-cavities and the inside of cupboards, especially in the corners and interstices, may yield some information. Above all, always suspect the

Fig. 527.

LACQUERED HANGING CHINA CABINET.

(One of a pair.)

4 ft. 10½ ins. total height; 2 ft. 6½ ins. wide; 9¼ ins. deep outside.

Date about 1750–5.

The Marquis of Townshend.

minutely crazed lacquer surface ; a coating of strong dextrine applied, before the ground is thoroughly hard, allowed to stand for a week, and then washed off, will produce a beautiful crazed pattern. The usual hints, which apply to other furniture, may be observed with advantage, especially if allied with strong common sense and an absence of prejudice.

The value of original lacquer work depends upon the colour of the ground, its quality, and the perfection of the drawing and execution of the ornament. Apart from the polychromatic incised lacquer, the rarest ground colours are the blue, yellow and red. The pale blue is not so rare and is generally worthless ; the valuable colour is the deep cobalt blue, nearly always laid in a stippled tone on an undercoating of white or silver. This is the rarest ground of all, and is always found associated with polychrome ornament of fine execution. The yellow, buff or biscuit grounds are also very exceptional and the ornament here is also nearly always polychromatic. Red lacquer, to be valuable, should be of a deep sealing-wax tint, and the ornament should be sharp in modelling, well executed and gilded. Of the other varieties black is the most common, and green, —unless of fine colour,—is also frequently met with. Tortoise-shell grounds are generally of poor quality, and are rarely found other than on the long cases of " Grandfather " clocks. Silvered grounds are exceptional in genuine pieces, although " fakes " abound. It cannot be too deeply impressed on the collector that lacquer-work should have a well-prepared glossy ground. A painted ground is not lacquer at all. Common work is mere rubbish, in spite of any antiquity, and should be rejected. Antique furniture has a peculiar charm when the quality is good, no matter how unostentatious the example, and it is this quality which should be sought for. A simple piece, well finished, and in its original condition, will be more esteemed, after a year or two of close association, than elaborate examples of doubtful quality. The former improves on acquaintance ; one appreciates fine cabinet-making and delicacy of line or proportion more and more. The florid piece, which may be genuine, but was never fine, is an unsatisfactory possession, and one which the true collector, sooner or later, will be glad to part with.

Almost at the close of the eighteenth century, lacquer work was again revived, with the recrudescence of the Chinese taste, but the original methods of preparing the grounds, with carefully felted coats of varnish, was abandoned in favour of the quicker, but imperfect, shellac and spirit varnishes. This later lacquer furniture has very little individuality, although, occasionally, even as late as the Sheraton period, imitations of bamboo furniture were made on wood, and decorated with panels in the Chinese manner, the workmanship of which is of quite a high order of merit. Generally speaking,

however, the period of English lacquer work may be said to extend from 1670 to 1740, after which latter date we find mere repetitions of the earlier work, or sporadic attempts at imitations of the Oriental manner which are too rare, or too diffuse, to be regarded as a definite style. As a history of English furniture can only be a chronicle of the rise, growth and decline of fashions, these later examples, however interesting, individually, they may be, cannot be held to form a section of our subject, as to describe and illustrate every offshoot from the main stem would require an account, descriptive and pictorial, of practically every piece of furniture which was made throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, and would conflict, on almost every page, with the system of classification which has been attempted in this book. As it is, the consideration of English lacquer work has necessitated an incursion into the eighteenth century, whereas the scope of the book may be said, in every other respect,—with the exception of the previous chapter,—to be limited to the seventeenth.

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